THE WORLD'S LEADING DRUM MAGAZINE

MODERN DRUMMER®

Drums And Percussion For The Amateur To Professional

JAN. '90
U.S. $2.95
CANADA $3.95
UK £2.95

ED MANN

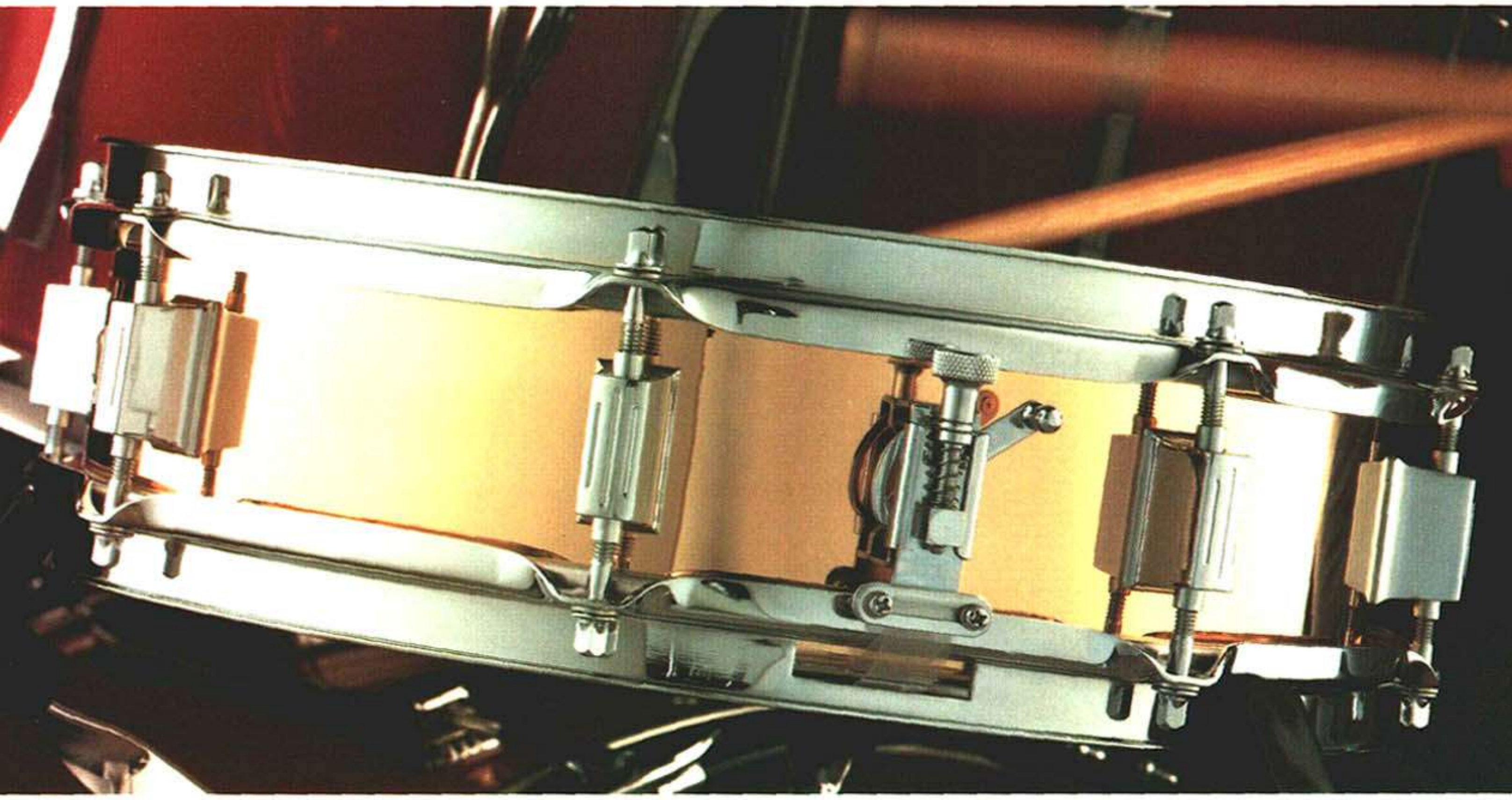
STEVE RILEY
Of L.A. Guns

ALVIN STOLLER

SOUND SUPPLEMENT
ED MANN
Featuring
Chad Wackerman

Plus:
- New Pedals
- Ageless Rock Beats
- On The Soundstage With Emil Richards
- Photo Gallery Debut

AIM HIGH



The High-Quality Tradition of Ludwig Snares.

To be the best drummer you can be, you need the best possible drums. That's why so many top drummers choose Ludwig snares. Ludwig snares are quality-crafted to give drummers the strength and versatility they need, with the sound they demand. Ludwig's newly designed piccolo snare follows that same tradition.

The High-End Pop of a Piccolo Snare.

Built to the original 3″ x 13″ size pioneered by Ludwig, the new piccolo adds a crisp, high sound to your music. It makes a great jazz/fusion and concert drum, and a great auxiliary drum for rock and studio work. Whatever music you play, you'll appreciate the strength of the redesigned high-tension lugs, the heavy-gauge batter and snare hoops, and the dependable new snare strainer with lever throw-off action.

New Ludwig piccs come in brighter-sounding bronze shells, or in Classic 6-Ply Maple for drummers who prefer a warmer, richer tone.

Ask to see them both at your local Ludwig dealer.

LB-553

LC-555-XXN

Ludwig®

A Selmer Company • P.O. Box 310 • Elkhart, IN 46515

FEEL
THE
BEAT
DW 5000 TURBO
BASS DRUM PEDAL
dw 5000
U.S.A.

Shown above, 5000 Turbo Bass Drum Pedal.
Also available 5000CX and 5000N.

STEVE SMITH
TOMMY LEE
ALEX ACUNA
TROY LUCKETTA
TOMMY ALDRIDGE

You can feel it.

The smooth, fast, powerful feel of Drum Workshop's 5000 Turbo Bass Drum Pedal. A feeling that comes from DW's patented Chain & Sprocket system. The multi-tooth sprocket and chain design allows the footboard and beater to move back and forth in constant unison; keeping the pedal in perfect balance and keeping the beat feeling great.

Made in the USA and backed by a 5 year limited warranty, the Turbo Pedal features an exclusive super-smooth Turbo rocker hub and bearing assembly as well as the increased strength and stability of DW's original one-piece pedal plate. There's a complete list of available options and accessories – from solid and split footboards to toe-stops and twin springs – so you can customize your pedal to get the exact feel you want and, for precise, dynamic triggering of electronic sounds from your acoustic bass drum, DW even offers a recently updated version of their Turbo "E" bass drum/trigger pedal (inset) with a wider dynamic range and stronger signal output.

But the bottom line is this: you can't copy a feeling. It's a simple fact that no other bass drum pedal feels as good as a DW Turbo. That's why so many of today's top players play it. And, no matter what kind of feel you play – swing, funk, latin or rock, that's why you should be playing a Turbo, too.

For a copy of our new, full-color catalog send $3 for postage and handling along with your name and address to:
Drum Workshop, Inc. • 2697 Lavery Court, Unit 16 • Newbury Park, CA 91320

Cover Photo by Leslie Burke

FEATURES

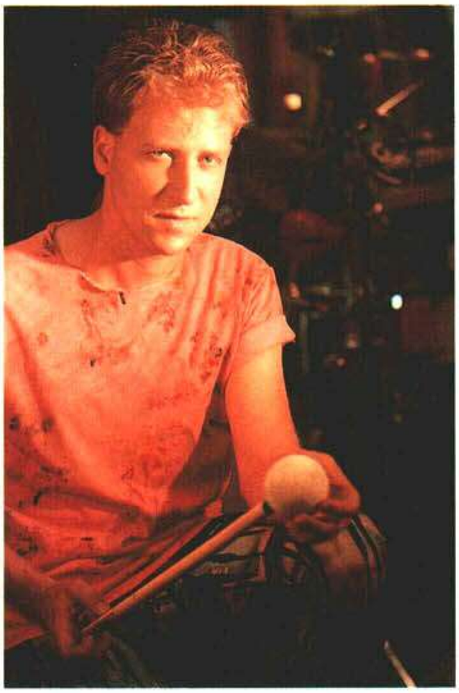


Photo by Leslie Burke

18 ED MANN

A long stint with Frank Zappa has given Ed Mann the opportunity to improvise and experiment with percussion in a multitude of ways. Here, Ed shares some of what he has learned along the way, and discusses his first solo album, his work with the Repercussion Unit, and the role of the percussionist and of electronics in music.

by Rick Mattingly

TAMA
L.A. GUNS
STEVE
Photo by Mike Jachles

24 STEVE RILEY

One might not expect the drummer from such bands as Keel, WASP, and L.A. Guns to consider jazz his real passion, but that's just one of the ironies of Steve Riley. In this interview, Steve also talks about some of the highs and lows of the music business he has encountered, and the lessons he has learned from them.

by Robyn Flans

Photo by Jaeger Kotos

28 ALVIN STOLLER

As one of the more sought-after big band drummers in New York, Alvin Stoller worked with, among others, the bands of Benny Goodman, Tommy Dorsey, and Charlie Spivak. In the 40 years since he moved out west, Stoller has backed up singers and movie stars like Ella Fitzgerald, Billie Holiday, Gene Kelly, and Fred Astaire, and has done endless TV, radio, and movie scores. Here Stoller reflects on his career and talks about the music business he is still very much a part of.

by Burt Korall

32 MD SOUND SUPPLEMENT ED MANN FEATURING CHAD WACKERMAN

Notes and transcribed examples of Ed Mann's and Chad Wackerman's parts from "This Is Tomorrow," from Mann's solo album *Get Up.*

COLUMNS

VOLUME 14, NUMBER 1

EDUCATION

ROCK 'N' JAZZ CLINIC
Double Strokes, Triple Strokes, Accents, and More
by Rod Morgenstein
46

CONCEPTS
Frustration
by Roy Burns
48

ROCK PERSPECTIVES
The Ageless Beats Of Rock 'N' Roll
by Kenny Aronoff
60

ROCK CHARTS
Phil Jones: "Runnin' Down A Dream"
Transcribed by William F. Miller
64

TRACKING
'Tis The Season Of The Sequel
by Emil Richards
78

EQUIPMENT

PRODUCT CLOSE-UP
The Black Max Pedal
by Rick Van Horn
38
The Vruk
by Bob Saydlowski, Jr.
39
The Upbeat Pedal
by Rick Van Horn
40

ELECTRONIC REVIEW
Different Drummer
by Norman Weinberg
42

SHOP TALK
Drums: An Engineering Analysis: Part 2
by Spiros A. Psarris
50

NEW AND NOTABLE
96

PROFILES

UP&COMING
Billy Goodness
by Michael Lee Briggs
62

NEWS

UPDATE
8

INDUSTRY HAPPENINGS
92

REVIEWS

ON TAPE
76

DEPARTMENTS

EDITOR'S OVERVIEW
4

READERS' PLATFORM
6

ASK A PRO
12

ITS QUESTIONABLE
14

DRUMLINE
106

DRUM MARKET
108

PHOTO GALLERY
112

EDITOR'S OVERVIEW

The Classifieds

Classified advertising has been a part of *Modern Drummer* since our very first year of publication. *Drum Market* is the place in the magazine where one can quickly locate everything from used gear, vintage equipment, and study materials, to a drum teacher or even a gig.

Interestingly, *Drum Market* is one of the most well-read sections of the magazine each month. Readers are usually invited to call or write for further information, or to send a nominal fee for a catalog or brochure. *Drum Market* is also appealing in that it tends to encompass the lower end of the cost spectrum for the budget-conscious buyer.

Occasionally, small problems will arise with classifieds, as they do for most widely circulated international publications that choose to publish them. Because *Drum Market* is made up of a substantial amount of smaller ads that generally arrive close to each month's deadline, it's virtually impossible for us to screen them all. In most cases we must assume that the advertiser is making an honest offer and will do well by his customer. Unfortunately, very few national magazines and newspapers have the time or manpower to screen classifieds, and readers should be aware of this.

However, I think it's important to mention that considering the *thousands* of ads that have appeared in *Drum Market* over the years, we've had a remarkably small percentage of complaints. I think it's safe to say that the overwhelming majority of *Drum Market* advertisers are sincere drum industry people, anxious to meet their obligation to readers.

Of course, *every* industry has that small group who never seem to fit into that description. And on occasion, one bad apple can get in among the good ones and cast a bad reflection on the rest. Most mail-order advertisers are aware that failing to be totally upright with their customers comes under the heading of mail fraud—a pretty *serious* federal Offense. Those who are not aware of it are quickly enlightened. Still, some people just love to test the limits of the law. Obviously, when that occurs, it's our full responsibility to weed them out of the magazine.

Should you ever have a legitimate complaint with a classified advertiser, please don't hesitate to contact our Advertising Department at once. A complaint can range from not receiving the merchandise you paid for to being fed misleading information through false advertising. Be sure to supply us with the advertiser's name and address, the issue in which the ad appeared, the items ordered and the date you ordered them, and copies of all cancelled checks or correspondence. This information will enable us to go to bat for you in the most efficient manner possible.

Again, I do want to stress that we've had an extremely limited number of problems with *Drum Market* advertisers in 14 years of publishing *MD*—probably less than 1%. Personally, I think that alone says something pretty good about the integrity of our industry as a whole. Nonetheless, we certainly want to be advised of any problems if and when they do arise.

RS

EDITOR/PUBLISHER
Ronald Spagnardi

ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER
Isabel Spagnardi

SENIOR EDITOR
Rick Mattingly

MANAGING EDITOR
Rick Van Horn

ASSOCIATE EDITORS
William F. Miller
Adam Budofsky

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT
Cynthia Huang

ART DIRECTOR
Terry Kennedy

ASSISTANT ART DIRECTOR
Scott G. Bienstock

ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER
Tracy Kearney

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
Joan C. Stickel

ADVERTISING DIRECTOR
Bob Berenson

DEALER SERVICE MANAGER
Crystal W. Van Horn

MAILROOM SUPERVISOR
Leo Spagnardi

CONSULTANT TO THE PUBLISHER
Arnold E. Abramson

MODERN DRUMMER ADVISORY BOARD
Henry Adler, Kenny Aronoff, Louie Bellson, Bill Bruford, Roy Burns, Jim Chapin, Alan Dawson, Dennis DeLucia, Les DeMerle, Len DiMuzio, Charlie Donnelly, Peter Erskine, Vic Firth, Danny Gottlieb, Sonny Igoe, Jim Keltner, Mel Lewis, Larrie Londin, Peter Magadini, George Marsh, Joe Morello, Andy Newmark, Neil Peart, Charlie Perry, Dave Samuels, John Santos, Ed Shaughnessy, Steve Smith, Ed Thigpen.

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Susan Alexander, Robyn Flans, Simon Goodwin, Karen Ervin Pershing, Jeff Potter, Teri Saccone, Robert Santelli, Robin Tolleson, Lauren Vogel, T. Bruce Wittet.

MODERN DRUMMER Magazine (ISSN 0194-4533) is published monthly with an additional issue in July by **MODERN DRUMMER Publications, Inc.,** 870 Pompton Avenue, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Second-Class Postage paid at Cedar Grove, NJ 07009 and at additional mailing offices. Copyright 1990 by Modern Drummer Publications, Inc. All rights reserved. Reproduction without the permission of the publisher is prohibited.

EDITORIAL/ADVERTISING/ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES: Modern Drummer Publications, 870 Pompton Avenue, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009.

MANUSCRIPTS: Modern Drummer welcomes manuscripts, however, cannot assume responsibility for them. Manuscripts must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

MUSIC DEALERS: Modern Drummer is available for resale at bulk rates. Direct correspondence to Modern Drummer, Dealer Service, 870 Pompton Ave., Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Tel: 800-522-DRUM or 201-239-4140.

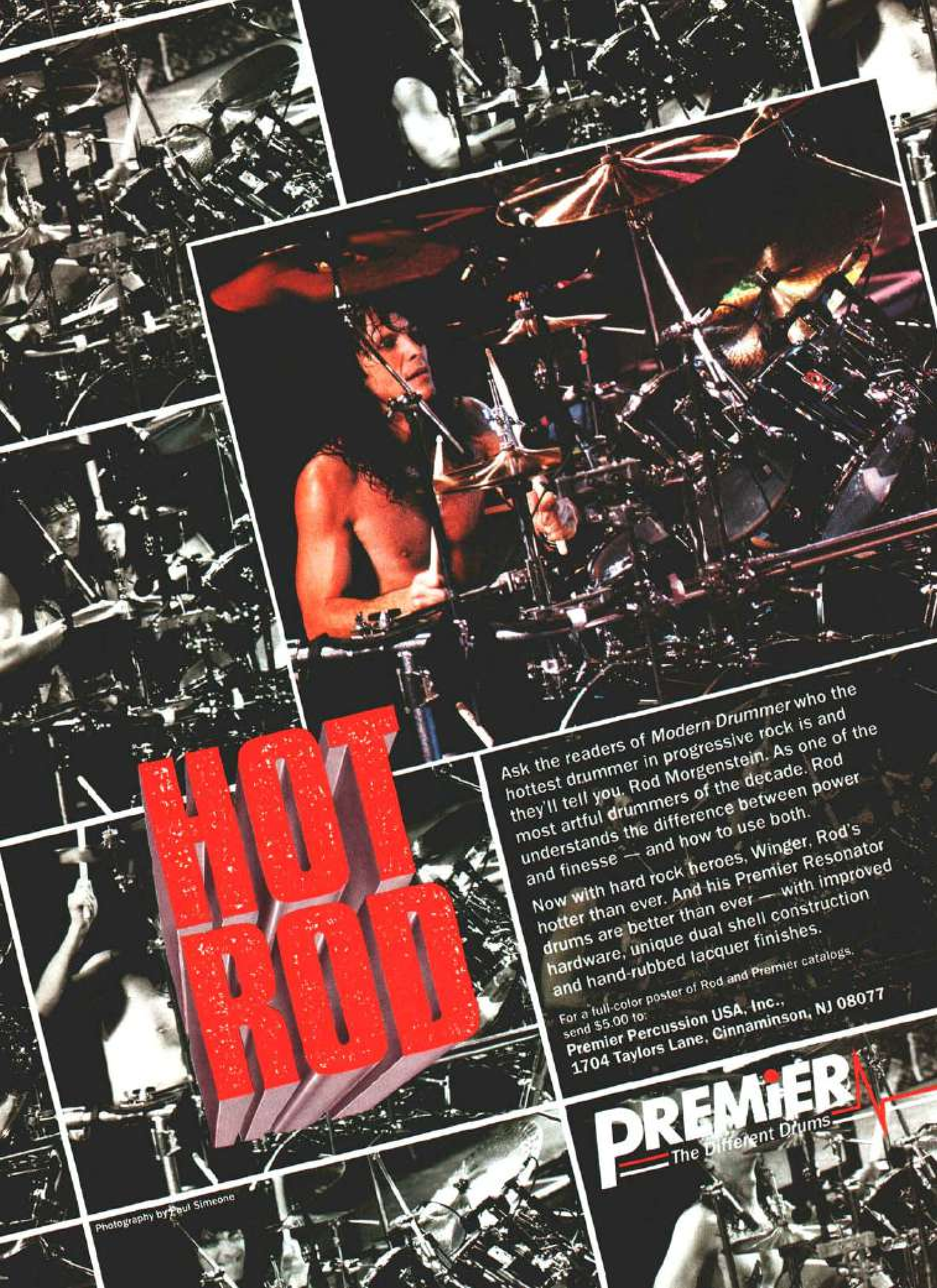
SUBSCRIPTIONS: $25.95 per year; $46.95, two years. Single copies $2.95.

SUBSCRIPTION CORRESPONDENCE: Modern Drummer, P.O. Box 480, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0480. **Change of address:** Allow at least six weeks for a change. Please provide both old and new address. Toll Free Phone: 1-800-435-0715.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Modern Drummer, P.O. Box 480, Mt. Morris, IL 61054.

A Member Of:
MPA
Magazine Publishers of America

ISSUE DATE: January 1990



Ask the readers of *Modern Drummer* who the hottest drummer in progressive rock is and they'll tell you, Rod Morgenstein. As one of the most artful drummers of the decade, Rod understands the difference between power and finesse — and how to use both.

Now with hard rock heroes, Winger, Rod's hotter than ever. And his Premier Resonator drums are better than ever — with improved hardware, unique dual shell construction and hand-rubbed lacquer finishes.

For a full-color poster of Rod and Premier catalogs, send $5.00 to:
Premier Percussion USA, Inc.,
1704 Taylors Lane, Cinnaminson, NJ 08077

PREMIER
The Different Drums

Photography by Paul Simeone

READERS' PLATFORM

JACK DeJOHNETTE

Rick Mattingly's interview with Jack DeJohnette in your October issue was complete, incisive, and well-written. Jack's comments were illuminating and entertaining. What more could be asked of a magazine cover story? Thanks for the excellent article.

Chuck Gilspeth
Baltimore MD

Except for his name in a couple of ads, I'd never heard of Jack DeJohnette. I have never heard him play. I'm a hard-rock drummer, and jazz drummers have never interested me. But DeJohnette's comments seemed to cover a lot of ground; he seems pretty open to a lot of things. Every so often one of your stories reminds me that drummers outside of rock have something to say—musically or verbally—that might be useful to me, too. Thanks for the info on Jack; I just might check him out.

Billy Baducah
Tyler TX

RICHARD BAILEY

I've been waiting to read about Richard Bailey for many years, since I heard him play on Beck's *Blow By Blow.* I have to say that it seems a bit of a musical comedown that he's now playing for the likes of Billy Ocean, but I suppose a gig is a gig for any of us. Anyway, thanks very much for the article. I really enjoyed getting all the background on Richard and his ethnic influences.

John Filmer
Redding CA

THE GHOST QUESTION

A recent *It's Questionable* item (October '89) discussed the Ghost bass drum pedal. I'd like to add my comments. In early 1975, I bought a *Ghost,* and found that it was quicker than the *Speed King* I'd been using for the previous 13 years. A couple of years later, I decided to buy a second *Ghost,* since I wanted a spare at gigs and to use for practice. So in late 1977 I bought a Ludwig *Ghost.* Although it did look the same, the action—even after weeks of playing—was nowhere near that of the original pedal. Spring adjustment did not help the problem, and I ended up trading the second pedal back to the dealer.

My original *Ghost* has been played almost every day for 14 years, and the only problem I've ever had is worn footboard-to-beater straps. If I can't find these, I make them. I do not change spring tension, since this causes the beater to drastically change angle. I use this pedal for all my playing and practicing, and it has been on the set at numerous jam sessions where it has endured lots of hard playing. (One guy broke a new head with it.) Some players love it and others can't use it, but all agree that it *is* quick.

I suggest that Ludwig "de-improve" the tooling, or correct whatever it was that made their model different from the original. Then they could reissue the *Ghost* and have two great pedals to offer. I'll take a dozen.

Mike Moody
Bloomington IN

BOBBY PREVITE

Thank you for the wonderfully insightful, entertaining, and inspiring interview with Bobby Previte. [September '89 *MD]* I am greatly sympathetic to his thoughts and words and am equally grateful to *Modern Drummer* for printing them. My heartfelt appreciation to you both.

Alex Cline
Santa Monica CA

REFLECTIONS OF A NEW YORK PRODUCER

I would like to compliment the article by Joe Ferry in the August issue entitled "Reflections Of A New York Producer." I thoroughly enjoyed reading about his perspective on some of the great drummers he has worked with. It gave me a greater appreciation for drummers like Steve Gadd and shows just how proficient and professional they can be even under adverse conditions (such as working with a producer who neglected to include a drum chart for him on a tough piece of music!). Having non-drummers in the industry talk about our heros' adventures in the drumming world adds fresh perspective to our idols. Please give us more in the future!

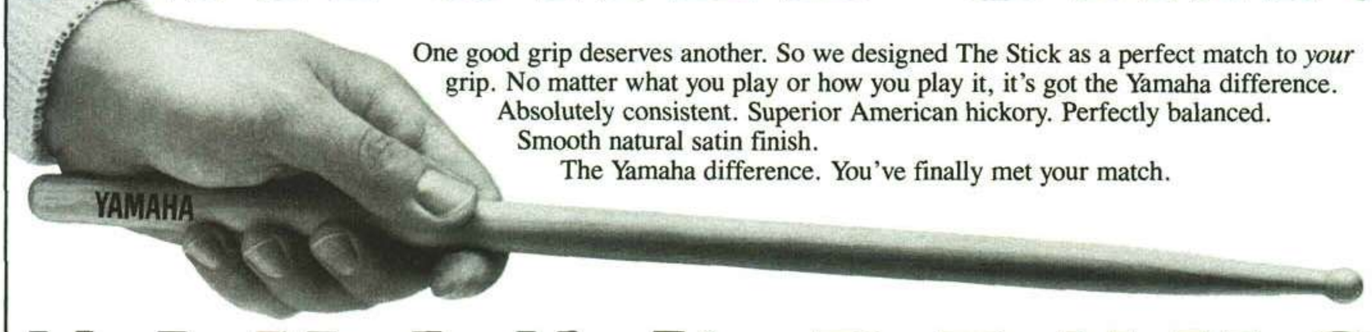
Gord Kribs
Bowmanville, Ontario, Canada

THANKS FROM JOHN

I was both pleased and surprised to learn that I was one of the winners of the July *MD Trivia Contest* and that I would be receiving the great set of products from JT. Enterprises. Many thanks to *Modern Drummer* for running these enjoyable and challenging trivia contests.

I have been a subscriber to *MD* since its very first issue, and I can't begin to tell you what an invaluable source of both information and inspiration it has been to me. Almost every day it seems that I am digging through back issues simply for enjoyment or to find some article to show to one of my drum students. As a teaching aid, *MD* is impossible to beat. The balance of topics and material is always perfect and (I can't say this about every other magazine that I read) there has never been even one issue from which I did not learn something new. *MD* is a great publication; keep up

continued on page 104



MATCHED GRIP.

One good grip deserves another. So we designed The Stick as a perfect match to *your* grip. No matter what you play or how you play it, it's got the Yamaha difference. Absolutely consistent. Superior American hickory. Perfectly balanced. Smooth natural satin finish.
The Yamaha difference. You've finally met your match.

YAMAHA® DRUMS

Copyright 1989 Yamaha Corporation of America, Synthesizer, Guitar and Drum Division, 6600 Orangethorpe Ave., Buena Park, CA 90620

THIS IS A
BIG DEAL!
TAMA
the BIG DEAL
SABIAN

TAMA
the BIG DEAL
SABIAN

Here it is...a sure fire way to get more bang for your buck! The **TAMA/SABIAN BIG DEAL.**
Tama, the world's leading "quality" rock 'n' roll drum company has teamed up with Sabian, the only dedicated cymbal manufacturer to offer you this incredible deal. Buy any Tama Rockstar kit and save up to $120.00 on the following set of red hot B8 Sabian cymbals: one pair of lightning fast 14" hi hats, plus an ear splitting 20" ride. Now that is a big deal!

The **TAMA/SABIAN BIG DEAL**—hot sounding drums and cymbals at a cool price you won't find anywhere but your authorized Tama dealer.

The Tama/Sabian Big Deal cymbal package is available **only** with the purchase of a *Tama Rockstar drum set*. This offer is valid at participating authorized Tama dealers **only** and expires December 31, 1989.

For a FREE copy of Tama's new *RS line catalog, send your name* and address on a postcard to TAMA: Dept. RSMD8, P.O. Box 886, Bensalem, PA 19020 • 3221 Producer Way, Pomona, CA 91768-3916 • P.O. Box 2009, Idaho Falls, ID 83403. In Canada: 6969 Trans Canada Highway, Suite 105, St. Laurent, Quebec, Canada H4T1V8.

TAMA

Glenn Symmonds

Glenn Symmonds has had a hectic year with Eddie Money, with whom he has been for the past four years. "I had been playing in town with the Untouchables, and Eddie was in town auditioning drummers. He came to one of our shows and came backstage and offered me the job. I turned him down, but he eventually talked me into it. At that time, I had heard so many stories about Eddie being messed up on drugs, so it was important for me to find out that he wasn't doing that. Once I found out he was clean and sober, it worked out great. After all this time, I'm the band leader, meaning that I put the band together and represent the band."

Musically, what Money needs from Glenn is a supportive drummer. "He's a singer, so he doesn't want somebody who is going to get in the way. It's very simple rock; I call it meat and potatoes rock. Yet there are some things we do with sequencers and more modern technology. The music needs authority and conviction—leadership—and he needs somebody who really establishes the time and the feeling of his music. He just requires a solid beat and gives me space to do what I need to do."

At one point during concerts, the band leaves the stage, giving Glenn ten minutes to do a solo at the beginning of "Shakin." To Glenn, a good solo is "communicating to somebody, making somebody in that audience react. I have a skeleton of a solo, and I dress that skeleton for the evening the way I feel, whether it's putting on a different pair of shoes or a different shirt, or dressing that skeleton with earrings and lipstick—who knows? Each night it's a little different," he says, adding that "Baby Hold On" and "Walk On Water" are also favorites of his to play.

As for the records, Glenn says he's gotten to do some recording with Money, but that "That's one of the political sides of the music business that people don't really hear about a lot of times. Eddie may really want me to do a record, but the producer might say, 'Hey, I've got my own guys I use on all my records.' That's unfortunate, but he is hopefully going to allow me to play on the two new tracks he's going to add to his greatest-hits package."

In his spare time, Glenn plays with the International Reggae Allstars (Peter Tosh's band), leads a celebrity golf tournament each week with drummers from all over the southland (California, that is), and teaches between 15 and 25 students each week he's home.

—*Robyn Flans*

Adam Nussbaum

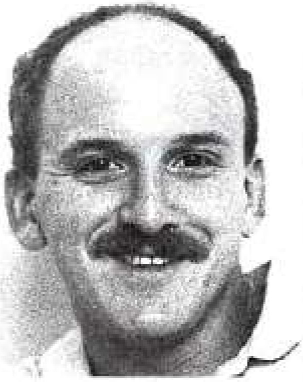


Photo by Renee Van Egmond

Since the early part of 1987 Adam Nussbaum has been touring the USA and Europe with Michael Brecker's band. Just before their appearance at the Northsea Jazz Festival in Holland—this year visited by 55,000 people—Adam related what was in store for the band in the near future: "We're just finishing up our European tour now. Then we'll go to Japan to play a large festival there, called Live Under The Sky, featuring Roberta Flack, Ernie Watts, and the big Ellington retrospective. That's about seven gigs throughout Japan and Hong Kong." Adam says he enjoys playing in Michael's band very much. "It's a lot of fun, musically speaking. The best way to describe it would be as a 'Bop & Roll' band, because we play some serious jazz as well as some serious kind of backbeat music. All the musicians [Mike Stern on guitar, pianist Joey Calderazo, Jeff Andrews on bass, and of course Brecker on sax] are very strong. This group is a chance for me to utilize a lot of my musical influences, and to bring forth a lot of the music that I like to play, in just one band. Everybody plays the shit out of it in this group; everybody is really throwing it down.

"Next to this band I've also been doing a lot of freelancing and recording with different people," Adam continues. "I just did the first Blue Note album by Rick Margitza, who's playing tenor in Miles Davis's band now. I also did a record with bebop singer Jackie Paris, and one with Tom Harrell, who used to play in Phil Woods' band. Those are all jazz recordings, but I like to cover a lot of territory. Some things satisfy needs that are just not satisfied in other situations. Like playing in an acoustic piano trio: Then I can pull out the old K's, which I can't do in an electric band. It's hitting at a different dynamic level. To be able to achieve the intensity in a small group as well as in a big one requires different concepts, different kinds of dynamic control."

Adam was also involved with a European big band run by Swiss pianist George Gruntz. "We did a little tour in May, and we recorded the group," Adam explains. "He usually gets musicians from all over the world and puts it together, like an all-star big band. He's done a lot of writing, and he's been active in the scene here in Europe, being involved with classical projects as well. Last year we did a jazz-opera with the Hamburg State Opera, which was called Cosmopolitan Greetings and featured a sextet, including three singers, on stage. Furthermore, there were two dancers, a big band off stage, and an orchestra. Dee Dee Bridgewater was involved, as were vocalist Marc Murphy, trumpeter Don Cherry, and Larry Schneider on saxes. It was an interesting project, coordinated by Robert Wilson, who is known for his modern multimedia events. We're talking about doing it again in 1990, maybe as an international production. Another of my future projects is an idea of pianist/composer Jim McNeely's that we'll do together with John Scofield and Marc Johnson."

—*Hugo Pinksterboer*

Martyn Barker

Although Martyn Barker is a member of King Swamp and has recently completed their album, he has also recently done projects for Shriekback *(Go Bang!),* Karl Marsh, Annabel Lamb, and World Party. On King Swamp's self-titled effort and Shriekback's current release, particularly, Barker added a great deal of his input.

"With the likes of Shriekback, I was more involved in getting a different rhythm with lots of percussion. When we were doing live shows, the intention was to get people to move, to dance and keep that energy level. All their rhythms are linear; there are no fills or anything like that at all. With Shriekback, it's a bit more intricate and jazzy than with King Swamp.

"King Swamp has a lot of high-energy stuff," Martyn continues. "Take for instance 'Original Man,' which is a very fast 4/4 groove and which really has to flow. It has sort of a difficult rhythm to do. I was working on getting that rhythm movable for the song and making it different as well. If you take Mel Gaynor's drumming with Simple Minds, when he does a rock beat, he pushes 16ths on the hi-hat, which kind of drives it. 'Original Man' is very similar to that, but there are quarters and 8ths, and we have an accent on the bass drum, just before the four-in-the-bar beat. It kind of pushes it along and makes it really exciting. Meanwhile, the bass guitar is doing 8ths. I also did a bit of programming on the album. And there is a lot of percus-

Now You're A Dollar Closer To Perfection

FEDERAL RESERVE NOTE
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
ONE DOLLAR

If you're a serious drummer, then you already know that Sonor drums are devastatingly close to perfection. And you also know they're very expensive.

But you may not know *why* they are so expensive. It's the *details* that give Sonor the quality that no other drum can equal. They look it and they sound it. And that dedication to quality doesn't come at bargain prices. So Sonors may be a bit harder to acquire. But once you've played on them there's no turning back.

Anyway, there is something we can do for you. Simply visit your Sonor dealer.* Check out our drums and we'll send you a dollar. You can even use it towards your first set. Now what are you waiting for?

SONOR®

Sonor drums. Details, not compromises.

*By the way, every drum shop doesn't carry Sonor. We're only in the most qualified stores. Call or write us for the dealer nearest you.

Sonor
c/o Korg U.S.A.
89 Frost Street
Westbury, N.Y.
11590
(516) 333-9100

sion—tambourine, shakers, lots of cymbal crashes. There was even more percussion on the Shriekback album, though, with gongs, congas, and claves.

"'Sacrament' on the King Swamp album is one of my favorite tracks," Martyn says. "It's one of those very big ballad-type songs where you really have to capture the feel. Everybody loves to do big, fast songs, and they're easy to do, but it's kind of the moody, slow-moving songs with that big snare drum that are a challenge—getting that right sound on the snare drum and just getting the right feel, making it really, really huge and building it.

"'Is This Love' is a combination of drum machine and real drums, with bits of cymbals and accents, working around the drum machine. In the last couple of years I've learned how to use drum machines and work around them. 'Louisiana Bride' has a great *LinnDrum* feel. If you try to do it with real drums, it doesn't quite capture it, so you work around it.

"'Motherlode' is one of those rhythms that you do the same bass drum beat all the way through the song. I started it from kind of a rimshot idea, then putting the snare in and building it. I played to a click track, which I think you have to do because it's such a linear-type feel. I put a triangle and a tambourine in and overdubs of crashes. But the basic beat was done in one take. It's a very difficult one to do because you really have to swing it and you've got the triangle doing 3's over the 4/4 beat." Martyn says that King Swamp should be completing another album by spring of next year.

—Robyn Flans

Paul Read

One night Paul Read was working in a local bar band in his town of Ipswich, England, when someone from the Outfield's management team wandered in. A couple of weeks later, they phoned Paul and asked him to sit in the drum seat that Alan Jackman had recently vacated. "That's alright, isn't it!" Paul exclaims with a laugh. "The next thing I know, I'm being flown around to all kinds of places and doing all these fantastic gigs."

Actually, first he went to London to rehearse with them for a day, and then he had the job. "I just listened to the albums a lot to prepare," he recalls. "I put the headphones on, turned up loud, and drummed along with them. That's how I learned how to play drums in the first place, by listening to other drummers. Then as we're playing the songs live, new ideas are constantly coming up. On the older, more popular songs, I've kept the majority of the fills the same, but I've had no pressure on me to play certain parts at all. We work it as a new band, really," Paul explains, adding that the music requires a steady groove beat, lots of power, and little flash.

"We do an extended version of a song called 'I Don't Need Her,' and it turns into a jam. No night is the same. I don't think I drum the same way twice, anyway. Everything I do is spur of the moment, and I never really know what I'm going to do, to be honest with you. It's just a jam improvisation."

Needless to say, the past year has been a big change for Paul. "It's really a dream come true," he says. "This is all I've ever had my heart on doing, so I was all ready for it. Plus I'm having to use technology—programming—that I haven't done before. I'll program a few percussion tracks, stuff I'd do if I had another set of arms, really—tambourine, triangles, and that sort of thing."

The album on which the Outfield is currently working—his first recording with the band—promises to be a group project, says Read. "There are a couple of songs that Tony [Lewis] and John [Spinks] have more or less finished, where they know roughly how they're going to be. But the rest of the album will be pretty much made up spur of the moment."

—Robyn Flans

News...

The Cleveland Opera opened its 1989-90 season with the world premiere of *Holy Blood And Crescent Moon,* composed by **Stewart Copeland.** Shown in the photo are (left to right) Copeland, Cleveland Opera Director David Bamberger, and conductor Imre Pallo.

Photo by Anastasia Pantsios

Milton Sledge on current albums by Barbara Mandrell, Kathy Mattea, Shenandoah, Crystal Gayle, the O'Kanes, and Russell Smith.

Marc Cohen touring with Russell Smith.

Clint de Ganon can be heard on Warren Wolfs new record, as well as playing live with Wolf and doing some European dates with Peter Moffitt. Clint also completed a track for a Japanese group called Bread & Butter.

Matt Johnson on tour with Canadian group 54-40 in support of their new album, *Fight For Love.*

Terry Bozzio on *Jeff Beck's Guitar Shop,* as well as doing live dates with the group.

Sol Gubin working with Frank Sinatra.

Mel Watts on Del Shannon's current release, as well as doing dates with Shannon. Mel is also on an album for CBS artist Zaca Creek (and can be heard on the Traveling Wilburys' "Let's Dance").

Percussionist **Bill Summers** working on Quincy Jones's newest effort.

Craig Krampf producing and playing on Ashley Cleveland's Curb debut.

Eddie Bayers working with Eddy Raven and Alabama, and can be heard on some of Buck Owens' new tracks.

Harry Stinson is also on Buck Owens' newest, as well as working with J.C. Crowley, Rob Crosby, Steve Wariner, the Forrester Sisters, Suzy Boggus, and Matraca Berg, and begins working on James House's next album next month. He is also the writer of the Ricky Skaggs single "Let It Be You."

Geoff Dugmore on Tony Banks's *Bankstatement.*

Michael Graves back in the studio with Broken Homes.

Matt Chamberlain on New Bohemians' contribution to the soundtrack for *Born On The 4th Of July.* The band is due to go into the studio next month.

James Stroud on The Snakes' debut Curb release.

Rikki Rockett enters the studio this month with Poison, who hope to have an album out by next June.

Chalo Quintana on the road with Walking Wounded in support of their album *Raging Winds Of Time.*

Frank Beard is on the new ZZ Top album, as well as playing a part on the Disney Channel's *Mother Goose Rock 'n' Rhyme,* a 90-minute musical movie produced by Shelley Duvall. He and his two ZZ cohorts play The Three Men in a Tub in an elaborate fantasy.

Russ Kunkel on tour with Stevie Nicks.

James Bradley, Jr. on the road with Mary's Danish, supporting their album *There Goes The Wondertruck.*

Charly Alberti spent the fall touring Latin America with Soda Stereo.

MAPEX
MAPEX
PEX

What You See Is As Good As What You Hear

Turn your inhibitions loose on or off stage with the Mapex Saturn Series — *professional* equipment designed by people who understand the importance of a premiere performance. Mapex Saturns deliver the sound you need . . . when you need it! Saturn's screaming snare will blow the roof off your high energy riffs and our booming bass will rock you down to your bones — all without missing a beat!

Saturn is sleek . . . sexy. Seven layers of polished maple and hardwood add some pretty serious curves to this "Powershell" powerhouse! Saturn has the good looks to get you noticed, and the great sound that will catch the ear of those who recognize a quality performance.

Our new *Pro-Lok* system guarantees stability — even during the hottest performance. And Mapex drums carry a "5/2" limited warranty plan — five-years on drums; two years on hardware.

Check out a set of Saturns at your nearby Mapex dealer. One look and you'll be rocking to the beat of a different drum.

MAPEX®

P.O. Box 748
Effingham, IL 62401
(217) 342-9211

ASK A PRO

JONATHAN MOVER

Q. I was really impressed with your *Sound Supplement* in the July issue of *MD.* One thing I noticed in the notes prior to the transcription is that you mention composing with Marillion. I am a very big Marillion fan, and have never seen your name mentioned in connection with the band. What exactly was it you did with them? Also, who are the other members that you mention play on the *Supplement and* demo with you? Good luck with your solo material.

Jim Siegel
Sharon MA

A. Thank you for your letter; I'm glad you enjoyed the Sound Supplement. *To answer your question, I worked with Marillion for a short period in the fall of 1983. During that time, we did a live German radio broadcast (which was later pressed and released in Europe), then headed to Rockfield Studios in Wales to start writing the next album. My contributions as a composer/arranger were mainly on "Punch & Judy," "Incubus," and "Jigsaw." These three songs, as well as "Assasing," were all written and demoed prior to my leaving the band. You will find my name listed among the credits of the* Fugazi *album.*

Here's some background on the other two players on the Supplement: *Michael Bean (bass) has recorded and/or performed with a variety of players, including myself, Vinnie Moore, Richie Kotzen, and Blues Saraceno. Brian Rahlly (guitar) is a Boston-area musician who can be seen and heard with many of the local acts there.*

BILLY COBHAM

Q. You re a drummer I really like to listen to; you seem to have that special touch when you jam on your drums. In addition to your talent, you have a great build, and you seem to control your body very well when you work with the sticks. I'm a 25-year-old bodybuilder, and I've been playing drums for five years. I want to work on my speed and control, with both hands and feet. Should I spend more time in the practice room and less in the weight *room?* Are there some special exercises that you work on to develop that special touch?

Gerardo Silva
Redwood City CA

A. I generally practice with parade sticks, about the Pro-Mark 767 *weight, and a practice pad. I concentrate on posture and balance while sitting at the drumset, since I believe that if a player sits below or above the drumset he immediately is working at a power-distribution disadvantage and cannot possibly utilize all of his power source. If you work in the gym, then you know that you cannot obtain a full workout without first knowing how to prepare to lift so that the optimum effect can be gained from the exercise you are doing. Maintaining good, solid, personal balance in lifting free weights is very, very important.*

How you address the drumset is also very important to your control of the drums. If you work a lot with the forearm muscle group to gain and maintain speed, then I would suggest that you try the smaller, more agile finger group. The fingers tend to provide you with more speed—as well as the ability for greater staying power when it comes to sustaining a particularly fast and complex pattern.

I don't think that you necessarily need to spend more or less time in the weight-training room versus the drum-practice room. But I do think that you need to study how the patterns that you probably already control to a certain degree can work better for you with a much more limited amount of effort applied to them. This is accomplished by understanding your body and how you can make it work more efficiently for you.

JOE FRANCO

Photo by Rick Malkin

Q. I went to see you many times when you played with the Good Rats in and around Long Island, New York, and your style and showmanship really inspired me to play the drums. I noticed then that you were playing Premier drums, and I was wondering if you still do and what your setup looks like. Can you fill me in please?

Gerry Seidl
Lowell MA

A. Thank you for the kind words. I'm glad to have inspired you. Yes, I still use Premier drums, and have been for 12 years now. In my current live setup, I use two 16x24 Resonator *bass drums, 12", 14", and 15"* Projector *power rack toms, and 16" and 18" floor toms. Sometimes I'll use 10", 12", and 14" rack toms for recording. I also often record with one of my old Premier* Soundwave *kits because I love the sound of* Soundwave toms. *For snares, my current favorite is the Premier 6 1/2x14 brass snare. The drum was modified for me by Tom Meyers at Premier. He puts on extra-wide snares and a heavy-duty top rim (the kind they use on their parade drums). He also silicones two thin rubber fan belts around the inner shell, top and bottom, to take out just enough of the ring. For recording, I'll also bring along a 6 1/2" and an 8" wood snare, as well as my Premier* piccolo *snare.*

FAT IS BEAUTIFUL

Most drummers strive for a fat, rich, full and powerful tom sound. That's why so many heavy hitters use RIMS.®

With RIMS drum mounts from PureCussion,™ you'll release all of the potential volume, power and depth of tone that your toms are capable of producing.

GET BACK TO THE FUNDAMENTAL.

Most importantly, with RIMS, the fundamental tone — true pitch — from your toms cuts through. RIMS can help you eliminate unwanted high-pitched overtones and ring without using tape, towels or tissue.

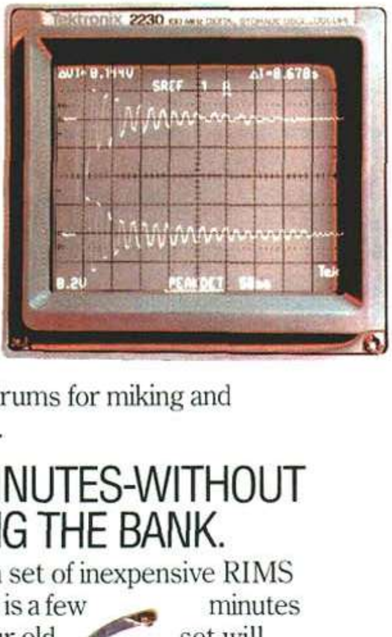
Plus, your toms tuning capability and range will increase — especially in the lower register. It's the edge you seek for live or studio playing.

SUSPEND YOUR JUDGEMENT UNTIL YOU'VE SUSPENDED YOUR TOMS.

Take a look at the oscilloscope picture. Adding RIMS allows the shell to vibrate freely. The fundamental pitches' attack has greater amplitude, the tone is more complex, and the sustain or duration of audible sound is significantly extended.

Hit one of your mounted toms. You'll hear a loss of sound quality as the vibrations from the drumhead deaden. This is due to the grounding effect that mounting hardware has on your drum shell.

Now remove the tom, support it with your fingertips under the hoop, and strike it again. Notice the immediate improvement in the sound quality when you eliminate grounded hardware. RIMS work like your fingertips. RIMS also isolate vibrations from other drums for miking and triggering applications.



GET FAT IN MINUTES-WITHOUT BREAKING THE BANK.

All it takes to install a set of inexpensive RIMS mounts on your toms is a few minutes and simple tools. Your old set will sound new, and your new set will open up. RIMS adapt to any brand of drums.

For more information and the music store nearest you, call (800) 328-0263. We'll help you unlock the fat sound of your toms with RIMS.

PureCussion™ RIMS®
DRUM MOUNTS

IF YOU'VE GOT AN EAR, IT'S STANDARD GEAR.™

IT'S QUESTIONABLE

Q. Please give me an address for the Sleishman Drum Company in Australia. I would like to get specific information on their double pedal pictured in your Summer NAMM '89 feature on page 36 of the October 1989 issue of *Modern Drummer.* Sleishman's pedal is the ideal product that will give me the body positioning I have been seeking on my kit.

S.C.
Havelock NC

A. You can contact the Sleishman Drum Company at TI Prices Circuit, Woronora, New South Wales 2232, Australia. You should direct your correspondence to Don Sleishman, who invented the pedal; he'll be pleased to learn of your interest.

Q. I have two questions, both relating to the J.C. Deagan company. First, what is their current status, and second, where can I get spare parts (pickups, support pieces, grommets, etc.) for a Deagan Model 575 *Electravibe?* Mine is in desperate need of repair.

R.L.
Albany NY

A. The J.C. Deagan company was purchased by Yamaha seven years ago. Yamaha has continued to manufacture only chimes and orchestra bells, and can only supply parts for those instruments. This manufacturing takes place at Yamaha's Grand Rapids, Michigan facility.

Deagan instruments were originally manufactured at 1770 West Bertrau, Chicago, Illinois 60613. That is now the address for Sentry Mallet Works, which is owned and operated by Mr. Gilberto Serna. Yamaha sold the parts and tooling that they did not want from the Deagan lines to Mr. Serna. You can contact him for further information regarding parts for your Electravibe. *His number is (312) 248-7733.*

Q. I was wondering why no major drum company—or any drum company, for that matter—is producing drums with pure fiberglass shells. I know that Pearl and Yamaha used to make them in the late '60s but discontinued production in the early '70s. Were the drums expensive to make, were there mechanical problems involved with the drums, or did the market go bad because of newer, better-sounding wood drums? I was also curious whether fiberglass shells in good condition will be collectors items in the near future. Finally, I've heard of drummers Vibrafibing their wooden drums with fiberglass. Is this an alternative to having all-fiberglass shells?

B.C.
Denver CO

A. While it is true that some of the companies that made fiberglass drums in the '60s have either discontinued those drums (such as Pearl) or have gone out of business completely (such as North and Fibes), it is certainly not true that no major drum companies are producing all-fiberglass drums today. Tempus Instruments and Impact Industries both offer excellent fiberglass drums, and raw fiberglass shells are available from A.F. Blaemire for those who like to custom-build their own drums.

The demise of the earlier fiberglass drums was due mainly to changing trends in drum sounds. Fiberglass drums produce bright drum sounds with lots of sharp attack. They are also quite loud. During the '70s, we saw the heyday of the dull, flat, "studio" sound in drums, which called for mellower-sounding drums made of wood. Fiberglass drums had always been a small portion of the overall drum market, and when interest in them sagged even more due to this trend, the drum manufacturers simply found that it was no longer profitable to offer them. Those companies that also sold wood drums continued to do so; most of those that sold only fiberglass drums left the market entirely. While it is not likely that any fiberglass drums will be collectors items simply because they are fiberglass, it is not unusual for collectors to look for drums made by some of those companies that went out of business, such as North, Fibes, or Zickos.

Finally, Vibrafibing is a process by which a fiberglass coating is applied to the interior of wood shells. It first came to prominence when Neil Peart described how he had had it done to his drums by the Percussion Center, of Fort Wayne, Indiana. It is not really an alternative to all-fiberglass shells; it is a means of gaining some of the properties of fiberglass shells (increased projection and reflectiveness) while retaining some of the warmth and depth of wood.

Q. Do you know of any companies who specialize in customizing bass drum heads, in terms of putting pictures on them?

B.P.
Maiden MA

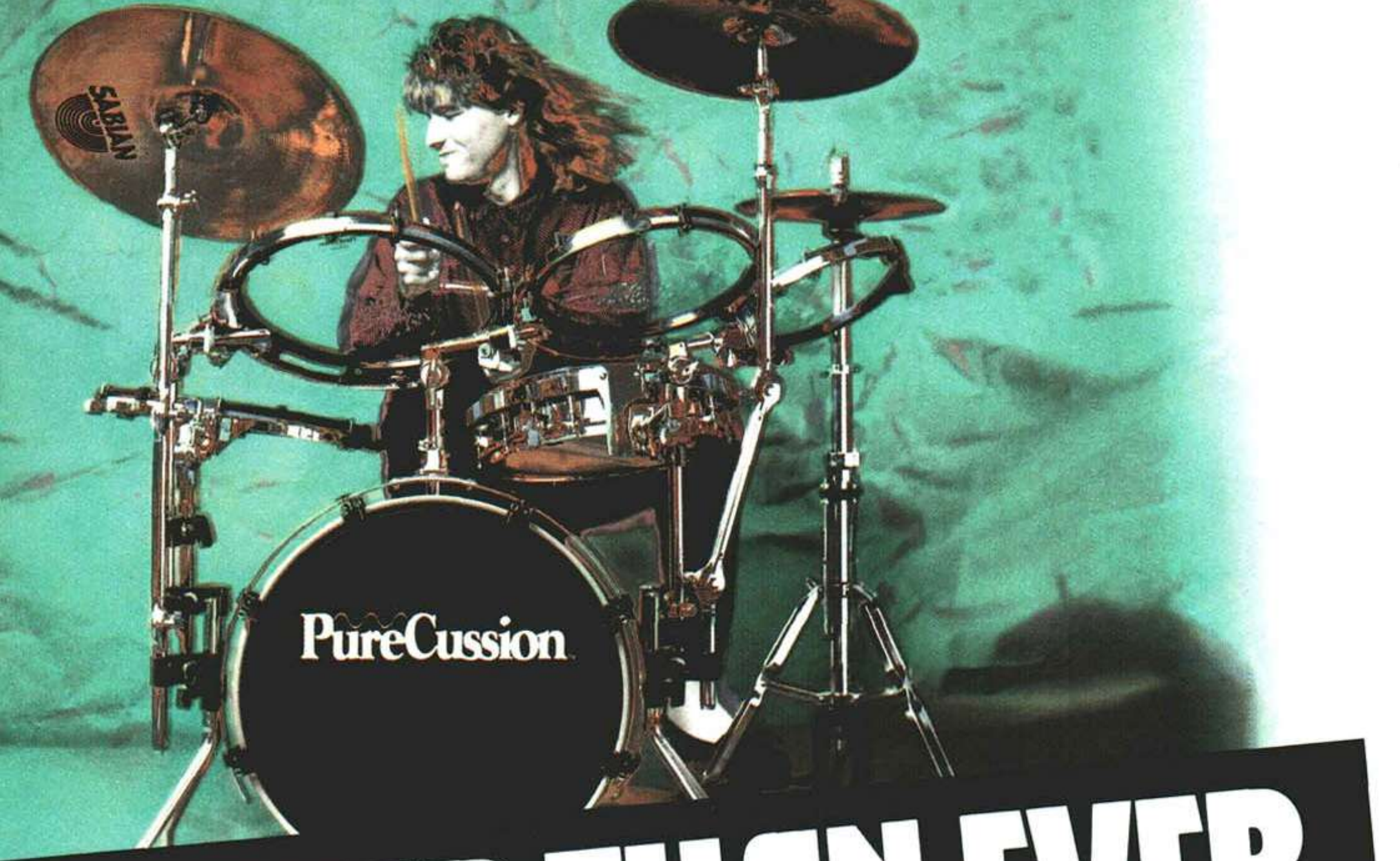
A. We know of no company whose business it is to illustrate bass drum heads. However, any good commercial art firm or sign painting company could probably do such a job for you. Obviously, you'll need to give them a sketch of the design and/or lettering you want, or work with their artists to create such a design. It will also be important for you to take the drumhead in to them when you first discuss such a project, since most drumheads are made of Mylar, *which is difficult for some paints and inks to adhere to. A white-coated head will generally serve as a better "canvas" for artwork than any smooth head, but a knowledgeable artist will be able to determine what sort of medium will work best on whatever head you wish to use.*

The Remo company can do some custom artwork as a special-order item on drumheads they manufacture. You should contact the company directly at 12804 Raymer Street, North Hollywood, California 91605 for further information.

Q. In the February 1989 issue of *MD,* there is a *Product Close-Up* on Paiste 2000 and 3000 cymbals. In the section about the ride cymbals it mentioned that the 22" 3000 Heavy Ride had a good bell, but that its sound was choked with a wood-tip stick but improved with a nylon-tip stick. Does that mean I can use a 5*B* or 2*B* nylon-tip stick, or does it have to be a lighter stick to bring out the precise sound of the cymbal?

R.M.
North Arlington NJ

A. There are a lot of factors involved in answering your question. Generally speaking, any nylon-tip stick will produce a sharper, brighter "ping" sound from a cymbal than will a comparable wood-tip stick. Also generally speaking, a stick with a gradual taper and a thinner neck will produce a more delicate, higher-pitched sound than will a stick with a thicker neck and more weight up front. (Such a stick will bring out more of the full range of a cymbal's pitches.) And finally, the third generalization to keep in mind is a relationship between stick and cymbal: The smaller the stick size in relation to the cymbal weight and thickness, the lighter and more delicate the sound produced by that stick on that cymbal. This means that a 5A *stick on a 20" medium ride cymbal will produce a pretty well-rounded sound, while on a 22"* 3000 *Heavy Ride it will likely "bounce off" a great deal and thus produce a higher, lighter sound. Conversely, a* 2B *stick will pound the daylights out of the 20" medium ride, thus producing a deeper, washier sound (since it's having more of an effect on the total cymbal) while it will "bounce off" the* 3000 *a bit more, and thus produce a more distinct sound. The key to getting the sound you want is finding the right stick to use for the given situation. It's possible to get very different sounds out of the same cymbal simply by switching sticks. This can save you bundles on your cymbal setup.*



FATTER THAN EVER

PureCussion DRUMS

The new generation of PureCussion™ Drums is built for those who want the maximum in sound quality and design. PureCussion Drums feature RIMS® Drum Mounts technology which allows the head to ring pure and free — giving you the fat, meaty sound you desire.

PureCussion Drums are ideal for those who have a heavy rehearsal or gigging schedule and need a kit that's easy to carry and simple to set-up. In fact, a PureCussion Drum set fits easily into one case.

INTRODUCING PURECUSSION DRUMS NE SERIES.

The new NE Series set gives you the flexibility to create your signature sound by choosing from any number of drum heads on the market. And for those who already own a PureCussion Drum Set, we have Retro-Fit NE accessories which allow you to convert your kit and get the true benefit of an NE Series set.

NEW TRIGGERABILITY.

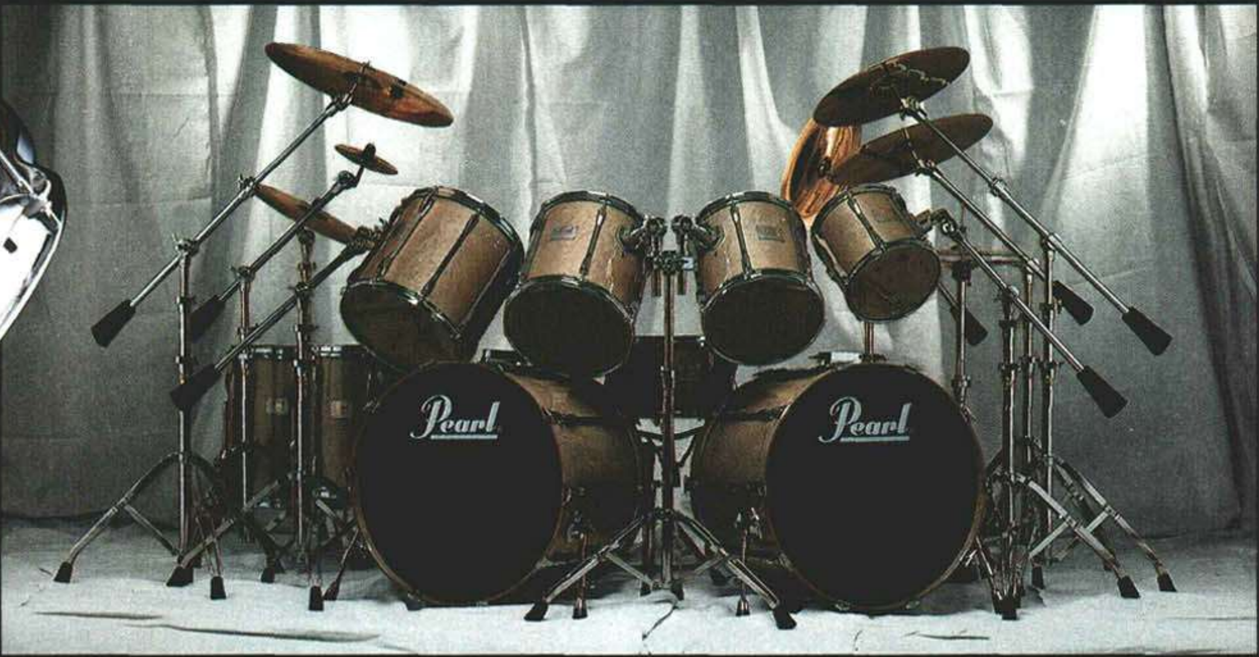
You can convert your PureCussion Drum kit into a "trigger set" with triggers specifically designed for PureCussion by Barcus Berry. And most importantly, you'll play with the right feel on real heads rather than pads.

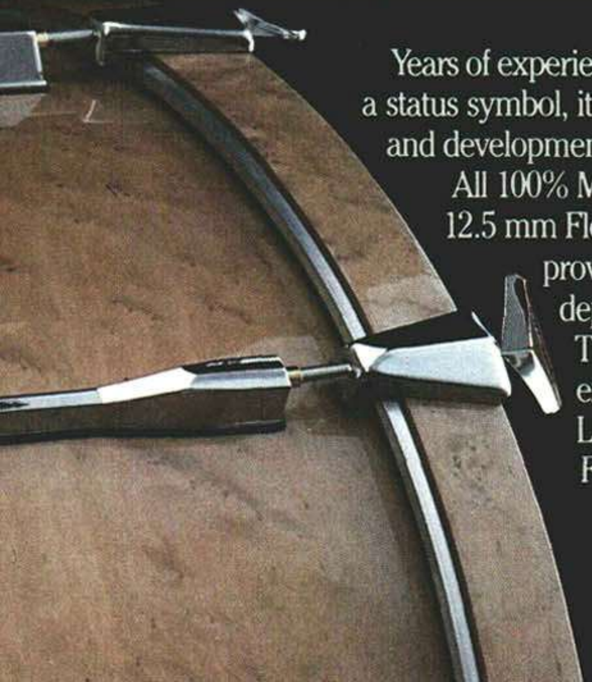
Call us at **(800) 328-0263** for more information and the music store nearest you. We'll be glad to help you discover the fatter than ever generation of PureCussion Drums.

PureCussion™ DRUMS
WITH RIMS® DRUM MOUNTS TECHNOLOGY

TIME SIGNATURE FOR THE NEXT WAVE.™

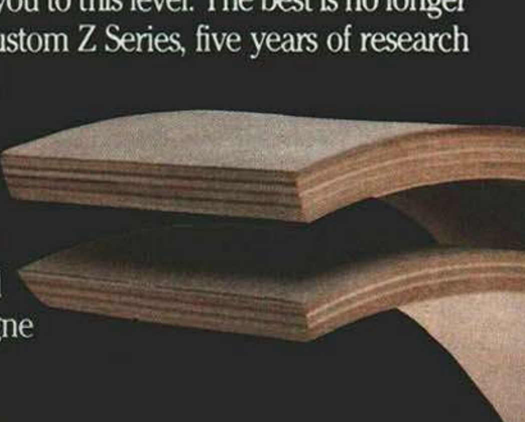
custom Z
SERIES





Years of experience and practice have brought you to this level. The best is no longer a status symbol, it has become a requirement. Custom Z Series, five years of research and development, a lifetime of dreams realized.

All 100% Maple 10 mm square size Toms, 12.5 mm Floor Toms and Bass Drums provide the player with unequaled depth, attack, and tonal brilliance. The Custom Z Series is produced exclusively in beautiful Champagne Lacquer over Birds Eye Maple. For those who consider their drumming an art . . . welcome the ultimate canvas.

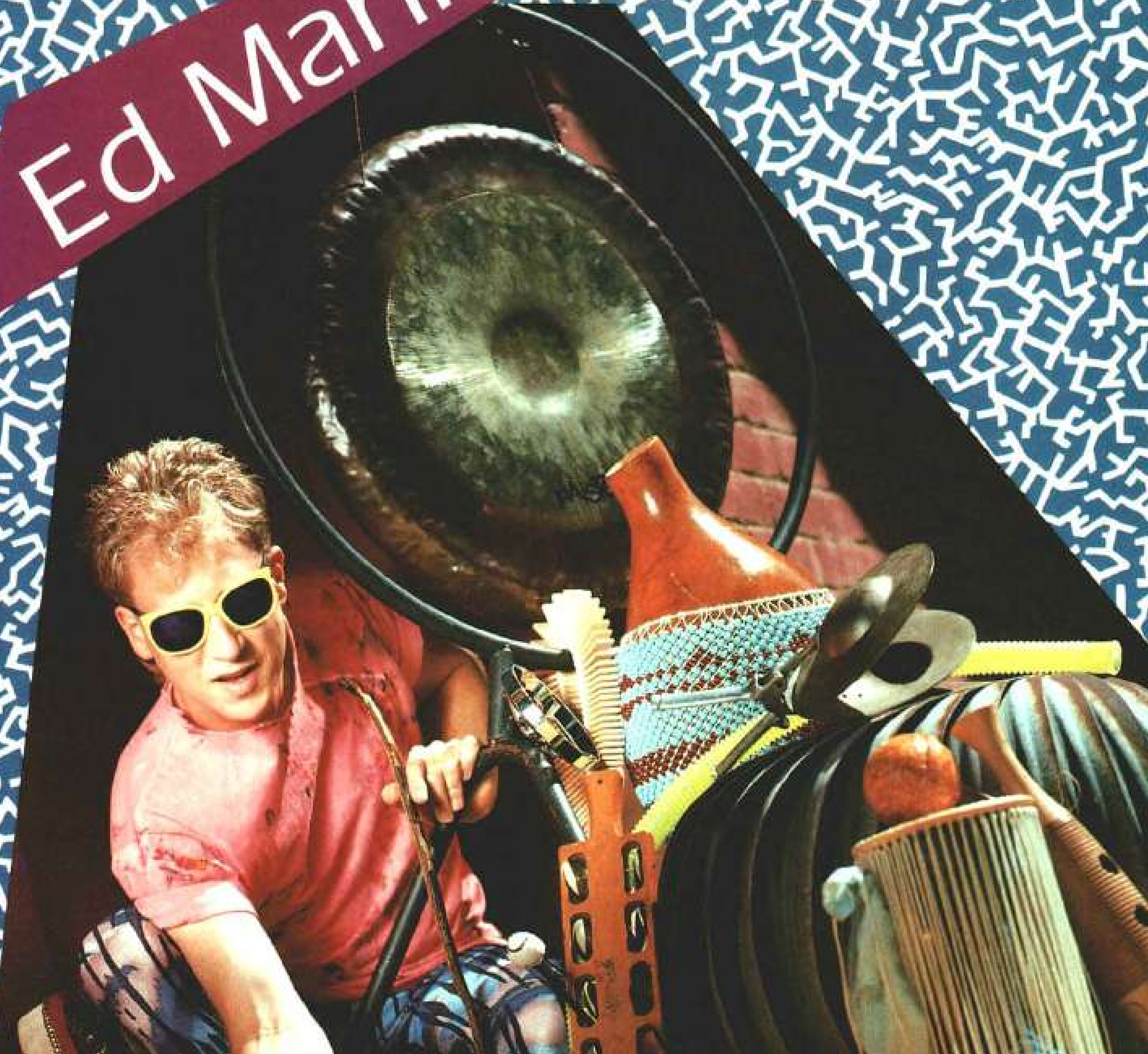


For more information write to: Pearl International, Inc., Dept. Custom Z Info., P.O. Box 111240, Nashville, TN 37222. Please enclose $3.00 shipping and handling.

Pearl

The best reason to play drums

Ed Mann



by Rick Mattingly

Photo by Leslie Burke

It's intermission at a 1988 Frank Zappa concert. It's a rather long intermission, too, because Zappa has tables set up in the lobby where people can register to vote, so I take advantage of the time to go backstage and visit Ed Mann. Things are rather hectic in the band's dressing room, where a *60 Minutes* film crew is gathering footage of the band members and assorted wives and girlfriends, all of whom are doing their best to perform for the cameras in a fashion suitable to fulfill most people's ideas of how a touring rock 'n' roll band acts on the road. Ed and I retire to the hallway outside, where we engage in some very non-rock 'n' roll conversation about the rewards and responsibilities of parenthood. Suddenly, Ed looks at his watch and excuses himself. "I have to change disks before the next half," he explains, heading for the stage.

Change disks? Mann certainly didn't have to do anything like that the first time I saw him live with Zappa in '81. And yet, at the time, his percussion setup was very state-of-the-art by virtue of the fact that his mallet-keyboard instruments were fitted with pickups and he had a couple of Syndrums. Now, however, with the advent of MIDI, the setup has changed significantly to include a KAT, two Simmons *Silicon Mallets,* a sampler, and various other devices designed to give him access to the widest possible variety of sounds within the smallest amount of space. Not that the setup is any smaller, though, or that it doesn't include any acoustic instruments. Although the electronics have replaced instruments such as chimes and timpani, there is still an acoustic vibraphone, a rack of gongs, and a table full of shakers, ratchets, tambourines, duck calls—you name it.

And during the show, Ed is running around within his setup just as much as he ever did, but he's playing even more than he used to. He doesn't have to drop his mallets to grab a rawhide hammer when he wants to play chimes now; he plays them from the *Silicon Mallet.* But while he's doing that with one hand, he plays vibe chords with the other, or shakes a tambourine, or smacks a suspended crash cymbal. I don't know if Zappa is the kind of guy who pays extra for "doubling," but with Ed Mann, he's getting about three players' worth of percussion in one person.

"Technology has changed everything," Mann admits. "Look at timpani, for example. I had two acoustic timpani on the first Zappa tour I did in 1977, but I could only use them to play isolated parts of two or three notes, or to roll on the final holding chord of a tune. Plus, they took up a lot of room, and we could never get them miked properly. But now, with sampling, I can have timpani sounds spread out over a mallet keyboard, which means I never have to worry about tuning, and I can play fast, scalular runs that you could never do on a regular set of timpani. Plus, there are no miking problems. Everything just comes directly out of the speakers. To be able to use timpani this way is amazing.

"It's the same with chimes," Ed continues. "We carried chimes on every tour, but the pickups never really worked very well, and with microphones you don't get the real body of the sound. You get the attack, but then it dies away and gets lost in everything else that's happening on the stage. I sampled the chimes and all the other percussion instruments myself in a nice-sounding room using a Beyer *M88* microphone into a Sony *F-1* digital encoder. So now, whenever you hear the chimes, you hear the recording of them in that room, into the *M88,* etc. It makes for a very controlled sound."

When using sampled sounds over a large range, it is often necessary to make multiple samples of the original instrument; otherwise, notes that are a lot lower than the original note can sound overly stretched out, and notes that are higher can start sounding like "chipmunk" music. But Mann found that he could go pretty far with a single chime note. "I stretched one chime sample over a major tenth," he explains. "It sounded completely natural. I sampled the D above middle C, so it went down a whole step and up a major ninth. I originally sampled all of the notes on the instrument; I chose the D because it had the best attack, and it seemed to resonate the best in that room and with that mic'. It was simply the best overall sample, and it worked fine for the program where I needed a tenth. I did make an extended program that was three octaves, and for that I used two chime samples: the lowest note on the instrument and the highest.

"It's always a kick when you do something for the first time: first gig, first time on the road, first time with a major band.... So for me, having my first solo album is that kind of experience."

"With some instruments you can only use one or two samples and it sounds fine,"' Ed says. "But with others you can't. With marimba, it starts to sound Squirrelly within about a fifth or sixth, so you have to resample. Drums often need multiple samples, too. But you never really know until you do it and listen back to hear the final result. Your ear will tell you if it needs to be multi-sampled or if one is enough.

"Another interesting thing about the chimes," Mann adds, "is that the samples I used were not made by using a regular rawhide chime mallet, but with a piece of wood. For some reason, by the time the sound came out of the sampler and was reproduced the way we reproduced it, that sounded more natural than the samples we made with the real chime mallet. The one with the rawhide mallet was too harsh; I think it was too much for the microphone or the room. It just didn't sound the same when it came back out of the sampler as it did to my ear when I hit it in the room. When I struck it with a piece of wood, you could hear a lot more of the fundamental, and it sounded more like a real chime. I've used that sample a lot with Frank and on other recording projects, and people always marvel at that sound. It was just a fluke. When you're making samples, occasionally you get those great ones, and sometimes you get one that just doesn't come out as well as you thought it would. There are so many factors involved that it's hard to know why that happens."

Besides the advantages of using samples for instruments such as chimes and timpani, technology also allowed Mann to have sounds that were previously unavailable or impractical. "Before," Ed says, "I could never have used something like Tibetan prayer bowls and gotten them to project over an ensemble. But with sampling, all of a sudden they're like big, loud bells. And one sound was a bunch of garbage cans. There was no way we could have had a rack full of garbage cans on stage. We didn't have room, and miking would have been a big problem. Or tabla—there was no way I could have thrown the mallets down, run over, picked up the tabla for a quick lick, thrown them down, and run back to play something else. But I was able to do all of these things from one pair of mallets. I had programs where a small portion of the keyboard was allotted to tabla, another part was chimes, another part was woodblocks and batterie-type percussion, and I could just stand there and get to all of it. Normally, it would have taken a couple of people to do that much.

"The'bottom line of all this technology," Ed concludes, "is that my role as a percussionist changed. Before, I only had four melodic timbres: vibes, marimba, xylophone, and orchestra bells. Now, I have all kinds of samples of my own, plus I was MIDIed into Frank's *Synclavier,* and he has a whole world of samples. So my role changed in terms of orchestration. I wasn't just doing things that a traditional percussionist did; all of a sudden it was the percussionist's job to play a harp lick. And then there were these vocal samples—anything from [guitarist/vocalist] Ike Willis screaming like Sam Kinison to the Wicked Witch saying '...and your little dog, too.' These sounds would just come out of nowhere during the show. As the percussionist, I wound up triggering all these things, even though a lot of people on stage had MIDI. The keyboard players could have triggered the vocal samples; in fact, at one point I tried to get them to do it because I was running out of memory on my sampler. But they looked at me like I was crazy. 'We can't do that. We're keyboard players. You're the percussionist. You do it.'

"And actually they were right," Ed concedes. "Even though MIDI is available to everybody, it's right for the percussionist to play the tabla part because he knows how it should go. And it's also right for the percussionist to trigger the weird sound effects. When Wagner needed someone to hit an anvil, he didn't give it to the clarinet player; the percussionist did it. So triggering vocal samples kind of fell in line with the ever-expanding role that percussionists are here to fill."

Discussing the percussionist's role can be a sensitive subject—especially among percussionists themselves. Many musicians see percussionists as "auxiliary" players who, at best, add a little color, and at worst, make everything sound like Spike Jones. As a result, many percussionists become overly defensive about their function. And in this age of MIDI, it has led some mallet players to completely abandon traditional percussive timbres and focus on synthesizer sounds that make their mallet instruments sound like keyboards.

Ed is well aware of this problem. "At times," he says, "I've felt that perception in other people's minds. It's a misperception, but if that's all they think a percussionist is there to do, then they don't bother to include you in their music because they think, 'Well, that's cute, but I don't need it.' We saw it happen in the late '70s and early '80s, when money was tight and bands were being trimmed down. The first guy to go was the percussionist, because that was always the thing people thought they could get along without.

"If playing percussion is what you depend on for your livelihood, you start to get nervous about it," Ed says. "So when something like MIDI comes along and you have the opportunity to address the same sounds as the guys who are working a lot—the keyboard players—then it's natural to want to be included in that group. 'See, I can make those sounds, too.' But if you go into it head over heels and take that on as your new identity, you leave everything behind that is special about being a percussionist. You end up becoming part of a generic group of musicians who all use the same sounds, and there's nothing very special about that.

"So it's important to have some perspective on where you're coming from, and even though you're using this new technology, not lose your point of view. Know the reason you play percussion to begin with, and what you can bring to that group of sounds from your experience. It's not just the sounds of percussion, it's also knowing how those sounds fit orchestrationally. Ultimately, you come up with something different than the average keyboard player would, the same way that a keyboard player would come up with better keyboard parts, because he's trained to think a certain way. So it's good to take advantage of the technology, but it's important not to lose yourself behind sounds that have become popular. If percussionists lost their identities trying to emulate another instrumental group, that would be an unfortunate side effect of the economic factors that affect musicians.

"I almost got caught up in that myself at one point," Ed admits. "There was a period of time where I only wanted to play electronics. But I reached a period of saturation with it, and now one of my favorite things to do is play acoustic marimba. After working with electronics a lot, you learn the freedom they give you, but you also learn the limitations they have. They don't have the same dynamic range, they don't have the same timbral qualities, and they are not nearly as expressive. You might be able to boost the overall volume of an electronic mallet instrument to the point where it's louder than an acoustic marimba, but relatively speaking, the acoustic instrument has a wider dynamic range. I don't think you could ever graph it out and say, 'Well, here it is. These are the limits.' Within the realm of MIDI instruments, there are generally 128 programmable steps that can be assigned to a given parameter such as velocity response. While that might sound like a lot, it's really not when compared to the dynamic range of most acoustic instruments—especially percussion instruments."

That's one of the reasons that a lot of percussionists refuse to get involved with electronic technology at all. And yet, considering all of the people who have tried to find practical ways to attach pickups to vibes and marimbas over the years so that they could participate in contemporary rock and jazz settings, it is surprising that instruments such as the KAT mallet controller and the Simmons *Silicon Mallet* have only enjoyed modest sales thus far. "Don't ask me why," Ed says, shaking his head. "I'm baffled by it. You would think that players would be eager to be able to address all the new sounds that are at their fingertips—or mallet-tips, rather. Of course, when these instruments were first introduced, they

Photo by Leslie Burke

were prohibitive financially. Since then they have come down in price, so now it's probably easier for people to afford. But I have talked with people who are very reluctant to get involved with it. I guess the only thing you can say is that they are purists who are not willing to dilute the art form in any way. And that's their right. There certainly is nothing that is going to replace the acoustic vibraphone. Nothing is going to replace a marimba. And there's nothing that's going to replace a sampler. They are just different instruments. One doesn't X-out the other. They both should work together, and that's how you achieve the most dramatic range of sound available. It's just part of the total picture.

"Some people may be intimidated by the technological aspect of it," Ed considers. "They might be afraid that they will have to spend most of their time twisting knobs and crunching numbers, and not actually playing the instrument. That can be true. I've gone through periods where I've added up my time at the end of the week, and 80% of it was programming and only 20% was playing. As a result, my playing would take a temporary nosedive—or at least I didn't move ahead. And that's not good; if you're a player you don't want to sacrifice that and become dependent on sequencers and that kind of thing. But I haven't found it to be a permanent limitation because ultimately it opens my ears to new things. By being able to address different timbres I wind up playing differently, and I see that as part of the growth cycle.

"But that's just me," Ed says. "Other people may feel differently about it, and they have every right to do what they want. I would hope that enough players latch on so that the manufacturers are motivated to keep making these instruments, because if sales aren't good enough, then they won't. Many of the major electronics manufacturers are having a hard time these days. So we can be thankful for guys like Bill Katoski, who has this small, family-run business making KATs, and he's completely dedicated to the art of percussion controllers. Without guys like that, we'd really be in the dark. Hopefully this thing will eventually catch on, and someday you'll be able to go out and buy a mallet controller as easily as you can buy a keyboard instrument.

"You know," Ed muses, "a lot of percussionists are probably shocked that technology ever arrived at their door. I mean, look at the vibraphone. Why doesn't anyone make a vibe that goes below F? If they would at least go down one note to E then you could play with guitarists and have that note in common. But they only make vibes that go from F to F because that was the original design and it will never change. So ten years ago, when keyboard players were suddenly getting all of these new sounds, percussionists probably thought, 'We'll never have all of this electronic stuff because manufacturers have never paid any attention to us anyway, so we'll concentrate on all of the acoustic instruments.' Now, when a couple of manufacturers *do* apply the technology to percussion, it takes a couple of years for people to get turned around and start thinking, 'Oh, the stuff *is* here for us. We *can* use it.'"

Ed Mann has certainly been one to use it, to the point of finding ways to adapt equipment to his needs in ways the manufacturers never thought of. For example, while preparing for the Zappa tour, he came across a device called *The Mapper,* made by Axxess Unlimited and marketed by Intelligent Music. Originally, the device was intended to do the kind of thing described above: allow Ed to divide his mallet keyboard into different areas, and have different types of instruments grouped on one keyboard. *"The Mapper can* do a lot of different things," Ed says. "In fact, I've heard it referred to as a Swiss army knife for MIDI. Besides dividing the keyboard into different sections, another way I used it was to build up chord voicings on individual notes. That way, I could be playing a slow vibraphone melody with one hand, and with the other hand I could play complex chords on the *Silicon Mallet* by just hitting one note. And the chords could be made up of synthesizer sounds combined with a single chime note from the sampler.

Photo by Leslie Burke

"But what is really novel is the switching system I worked out. After I had all of the MIDI program information organized, I still had to come up with a way to get from one group of sounds to another, or into the *Synclavier,* without having to drop the mallets and press a program number. So, using *The Mapper,* we came up with a system whereby I could step on a footpedal, and that would cut off all sound and put the keyboard into switch mode. Middle C became the number 10, D became 20, and so on. As soon as I hit one of those, it changed again so that C became 1, D became 2, etc. What that meant was that if I wanted to go to, say, program 35, I would step on the footpedal, hit E and then G, and the sounds would change from chimes, timpani, and woodblock, to strings, vocal samples, and tabla, or whatever. And it happened fast; I could hit the two notes almost as close together as you would play a flam, and it would change instantaneously.

"The guys at Intelligent Music were pretty amazed by that. They helped us—myself and the technicians, Bob Rice and Chuck Becker—work out the system when I told them what we wanted to do one night at a rehearsal. They didn't have to burn any new chips or anything; they just had to type some numbers into the program. You can write hexadecimal code into *The Mapper,* which allows for this kind of unorthodox programming."

Hearing Mann discuss electronics at this level, one might assume that he has some type of engineering background, or at least that he spent a lot of time learning about electronics in college. Not so. During his years as a student at CalArts, Ed spent major portions of his time studying the mridangam—the principal hand drum of South Indian classical (Karnatic) music. That's about as far from electronics as one can get.

"I really should get back into that," Ed laughs. "And I'm not sorry that I spent all of that time playing mridangam. It was time well spent. For a real all-around percussionist, it takes years to develop proficiency on all of the instruments. Electronics is just one aspect of it. Hand drums are another aspect, and they are really important, as are each of the aspects of percussion. To me they are all part of the same thing."

But for students entering college, certain decisions have to be made. Should they view college as a place to prepare for the real world? If so, then perhaps they should be taking courses in electronics and in how to record a jingle. Or should college be a place where you can forget about the real world for a few years and concentrate on the art? As we enter the '90s, would Mann encourage someone who wanted to pursue a course in hand drumming for four years, or would he encourage a more "modern" course of study?

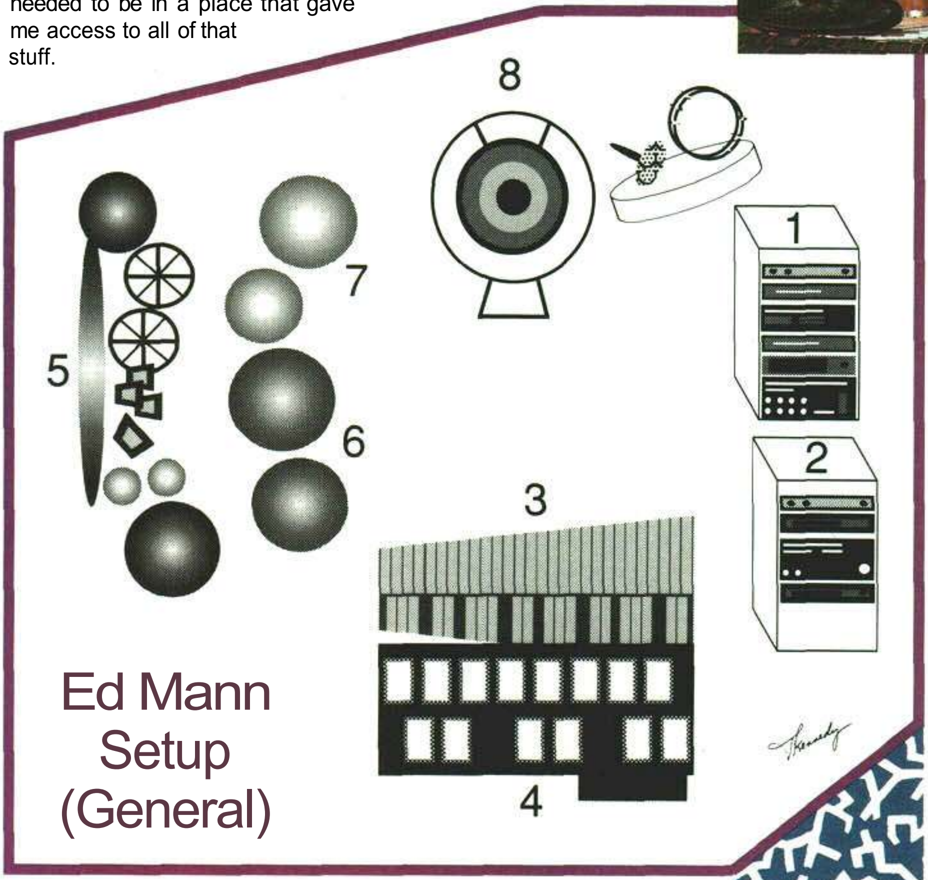
"I don't know," he says, after a long pause. "The more years I spend teaching at CalArts and hanging around the college environment, the more I am completely confused by it. I don't know what the real purpose of college is. I suppose it depends on the individual. For me, the best part of going to college was being exposed to things I had never seen or heard before, and to be able to experiment in a safe—non-professional—environment. Also, it was necessary for me in terms of the fact that I didn't own a marimba or timpani or any of those instruments. So I needed to be in a place that gave me access to all of that stuff.

"On the other hand, plenty of people become accomplished players without going to college, so college is just one way of doing it. These days, it might be financially prohibitive; do you want to spend $50,000 for four years in a theoretical environment? Maybe not. Maybe you should just go out and start getting professional experience as soon as possible. But then again, maybe you are the type of person who needs three or four years of concentrated study before you can be ready to be professional. That varies from individual to individual.

"One thing I've noticed is that the nature of the percussion students I've seen is changing. Less and less are coming in as all-

"A lot of percus-
probably
technology
at their

Photo by Leslie Burke



Ed Mann Setup (General)

1. Electronics Rack #1
Same as Zappa setup

2. Electronics Rack #2
Same as Zappa setup but without *SDX*

3. Deagan vibes with transducers

4. Simmons *Silicon Mallet* (3 octave)

5. Percussion Rack
- 1 Paiste 14" Short Crash
- 1 Paiste 2000 series 20" China-type
- 1 Paiste 2000 series 8" splash
- 1 Paiste 3000 series 8" bell
- 2 layered, old, cracked cymbals
- 3 LP cowbells (high, medium, low)
- 2 Remo Spoxe (5.5" and 9.5")
- 1 Chinese temple block

6. Remo Timbales

7. Gon Bops conga and tumba

8. Paiste *Sound Creation* Cong #4 (24")

Hand percussion (on tops of racks 1 and 2): homemade shakers, Remo tambourines, JAG talking drum and Toke bell, LP bell tree.

Microphone: Beyer *M88* dynamic

Speakers: 2 Electro-Voice model *100S*

Sticks **and** mallets: Vic Firth *5A* sticks; Vic Firth *M2* and *M3* mallets

Setup designed and built with Chuck Becker sionists are shocked that ever arrived door."

1. Electronics Rack #1
1 Axxess/Intelligent Music *The Mapper*
2 Yamaha SPX 90s
1 Oberheim *Matrix 6R* synthesizer
1 Oberheim *DPX-1* sample player
1 Akai *S900* digital sampler
1 Hill *Multimix*
1 Alesis *Midiverb II*
1 Alesis *Microlimiter*
1 Alesis *Micro Cate*
1 Alesis *Micro Enhancer*

2. Electronics Rack #2
1 Simmons SDX sampler/workstation
1 Simmons *SDE* synthesizer module
3 Simmons *MTX9* Percussion Modules
1 Korg KMX 722 Line Mixer
1 Korg SDD 300 Digital Delay
1 Ibanez *MSP 1*000 multi-signal processor
1 QSC model 7200 stereo power amp

3. Cymbals and Gongs Rack
1 pair Paiste 500 series 18" Band cymbals
1 pair Paiste 2000 series China-type cymbals
1 Paiste Sound *Creation* Cong #2 (20.5")
1 Paiste *Sound Creation* Gong #4 (24")
1 Paiste Sound *Creation* Gong #7 (20")
1 Paiste 30" *Earth* Gong
1 Paiste 2000 series 8" splash
1 Paiste 3000 series 8" bell
3 Wuhan opera gongs (11", 13", 16")
2 Paiste gong mallets

4. KAT MIDI Mallet Controller (1 octave)

5. Six Simmons SDX trigger pads

6. LP bell tree

7. Ross orchestra bells

8. Deagan vibraphone with Deagan transducers

9. Hand-percussion Table
1 each: Acme siren, police whistle, duck call, crow call, goose call, cuckoo call, nightingale call, quail call, Carroll Sound pop gun, taxi horn, ratchet
Several of each: homemade shakers, Remo tambourines, Ludwig tambourines, LP cowbells, Brazilian samba whistles and bird calls, air tubes
LP plastic maracas
LP Clackers

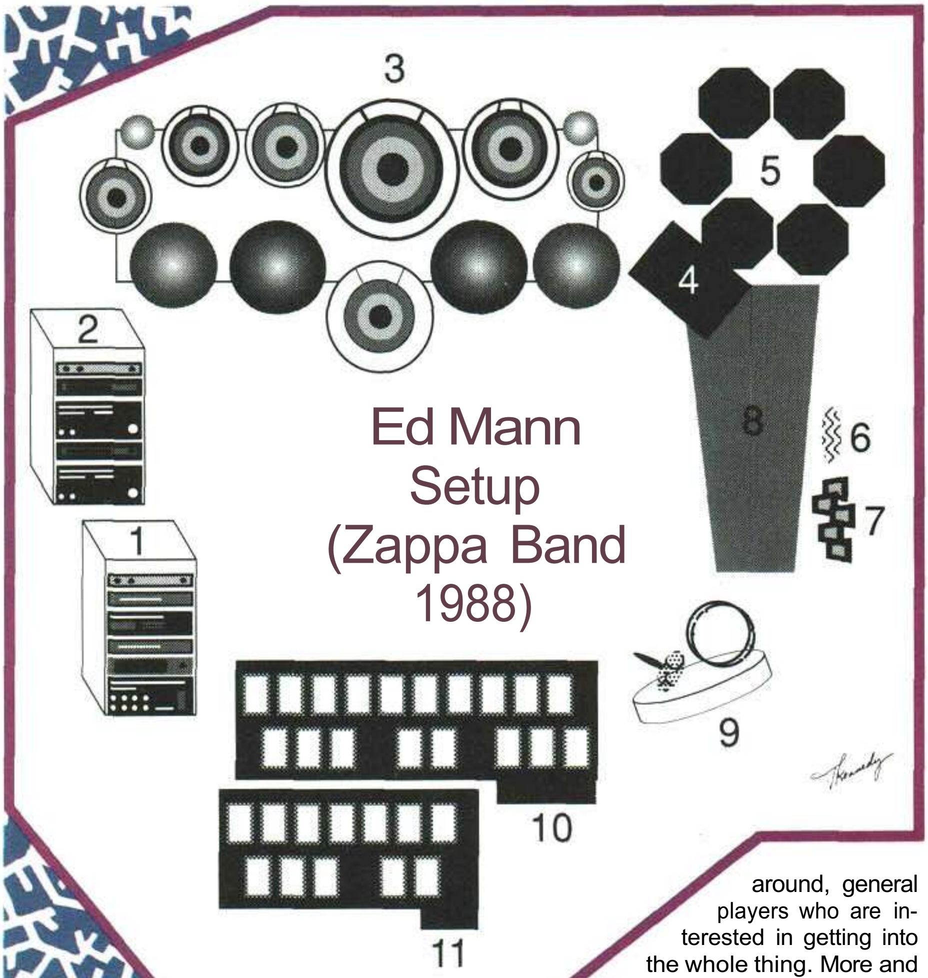
10. Simmons *Silicon Mallet* (4 octave)

11. Simmons *Silicon Mallet* (3 octave)

Microphones: Beyer M500 Ribbon Microphone and *M88* dynamic microphone

Sticks and mallets: Vic Firth *5A* sticks; Vic Firth M2and *M3* mallets

Setup designed and built with Chuck Becker



Ed Mann Setup (Zappa Band 1988)

around, general players who are interested in getting into the whole thing. More and more are coming in as specialists. It's not just with music; in general, people seem to be deciding what specific career they want to pursue before they even enter college. It's an '80s thing.

"I don't know how accurate my perception of this is," Ed says. "I only see one very small group of students who come to one very esoteric arts school, and I'm only involved with the school peripherally. John Bergamo could probably provide more information about this. From what I've seen, he does his best to free the students of any preconceived ideas they may have about percussion playing and music in general, and eventually get them into musical situations they probably never dreamed of. That's pretty valuable if you can afford to do it—take some chances and delve into some new areas to help you decide what you like and what you don't like."

And perhaps that's the connection between mridangam and electronics. When Ed first came to CalArts, he was taught to be open to new possibilities, whatever they may be. "I had no idea what a mridangam was," he says, "or gamelan, or any of that stuff. It all kind of hit me right in the face. So yeah, that could be true. My mind was opened up to exploring all the possibilities. Compared to mridangam, electronics weren't all that mysterious. There were a lot of other people involved in it that you could talk to about it, and all of the instruments came with manuals."

Another mind-opening experience for Ed was his involvement in the CalArts percussion ensemble, which evolved into the Repercussion Unit—a group that has continued to this day. They released a critically-acclaimed album on CMP records in 1988, titled *In Need Again,* and have recently been in the studio preparing their next release. "We went to Germany in May and did four days of tracking," Ed explains. "Whereas *In Need Again* was made up of actual composed pieces, this one will consist of a different kind of material that we've been developing ever since we first played together. It's completely improvisational—not rehearsed, not arranged. Basically,

continued on page 52

One look at Steve Riley and there's no doubt that he's in a heavy metal band—the long black hair, the black painted fingernails—but there is an abundance underneath the exterior that is impossible to know until a lengthy conversation has been had. First off, Steve's passion is jazz, and if the truth be known, he wishes that genre of music were financially lucrative for him. That's the other thing about Steve that is interesting: He's been able to see heavy metal music as a job—one he enjoys, but a job nonetheless.

In the thickest of Boston accents, Steve talks about the several record deals he's had throughout the pursuit of the ideal situation. From Keel to WASP, and now with L.A. Guns, Steve has found his niche in heavy metaldom. He's made money and lost money, had high expectations and had his hopes dashed, meeting with large doses of the reality of disappointment that goes with the music business. And he has discovered that it is a business. Openly, he shares the lessons learned and insights gathered through his many trials and tribulations.

Steve Riley

RF: I understand that you are a heavy jazz fan.

SR: Big time. I started off playing jazz. My mom and dad turned me on to Gene Krupa and Buddy Rich when I was growing up in Boston. I was about four or five years old. I saw *The Gene Krupa* Story with Sal Mineo, and that was that. I bought a lot of Krupa and Buddy Rich duo records, so I started playing drums before Ringo and all of that. It was Ringo who turned me on to the whole rock scene, but I got my feet wet with jazz.

RF: How were you learning to play?

SR: By myself. I used to live in the projects in Boston, and a guy who lived across from us gave me my first pair of sticks and started showing me how to play a little bit. I did the marching band trip when I was six and seven. They taught me a couple of rudiments and stuff like that.

RF: So when you were listening to records, what were you doing?

SR: I was zeroing in on what the drummers were doing. I only had a snare drum, and then I got a hi-hat and then a kick drum. Because there were so many kids in my family, it was one piece at a time. But I was really zeroing in with my ear. I learned on the snare first, and then after the kick and hi-hat, I really didn't need much.

Then I started listening to Ringo, Charlie Watts, John Bonham, and Ginger Baker. That was when I started being able to play with some kids on the block. I slowly pulled away from jazz—always listening to it, but not playing it much, except on my own.

RF: Do you feel that jazz has helped you along the way?

SR: Without a doubt, because coordination in jazz is so much more critical. For any drummer who can take the time to listen to some jazz drummers, the wealth that can be picked up is just insane. But mostly, it gets coordination down. Rock drumming really does seem manual after that because it is just so 4/4, straight sitting on the beat. Jazz is so free-form and coordinated that every drummer should do it.

RF: What was your first professional gig?

SR: It was with a band in Boston in the '60s, at a disco called the Ball Of Confusion. I was about 12 years old, and I had to stay in the kitchen when the set ended. The rest of the guys were old enough to drink beer. I was always hanging with guys much older than me, like a five- or six-year difference.

RF: When did you decide to make drumming your career?

SR: I was so impressed by the drums themselves, I wasn't even thinking about ending up in a rock band. I was thinking mainly, "Someday I'm going to be able to play as good as Buddy Rich or Gene Krupa." It didn't change until I started doing those gigs at 12 or 13, thinking, "Well, maybe I could do this for a living." But when I was first playing, I was just consumed with wanting to learn.

RF: When you finally figured that you might do this for your livelihood, what was the plan?

SR: I was mostly concentrating on playing every day. That's what I still concentrate on, and that's what I tell kids who come up and ask for suggestions. It's just, "Keep playing."

So I played with all the club bands in Boston, doing cover material: Stones, Beatles, Cream, Blind Faith—that late '60s stuff. That's why I am very impressed with Charlie Watts and Ringo; they came up with the beats. They weren't flashy, but they never dropped a beat; they were always there. When somebody has that many hit singles, you have to look at the drummer; Charlie and Ringo were playing that backbeat.

RF: Did you think you might have to leave Boston in order to succeed?

SR: The last couple of years of high school, I knew I was going to have to go, and I was figuring out how I was going to break it to my folks. They were very supportive, obviously, because they let me play in their house every day for years, so they knew something was going to come down. But

Photo by Lynn McAfee

Doing His Job

by Robyn Flans

they wanted all of us to go to college. My dad wanted to send me to the New England Conservatory, and I could have taken that route where I'd learn how to be a real learned musician, to read and write charts and do that kind of a trip; or I was going to have to take this trip that was a little harder and more gritty. When I was in my senior year, a good friend of mine, Frank Dimino, was in Angel, and it was the first time I saw anybody getting out of Boston, playing the clubs and cities outside of Boston. So as soon as I got my diploma, I was gone. I went to D.C., then New York, then back to D.C., and then I started moving across country.

RF: What was happening inside your head while you were doing all this?

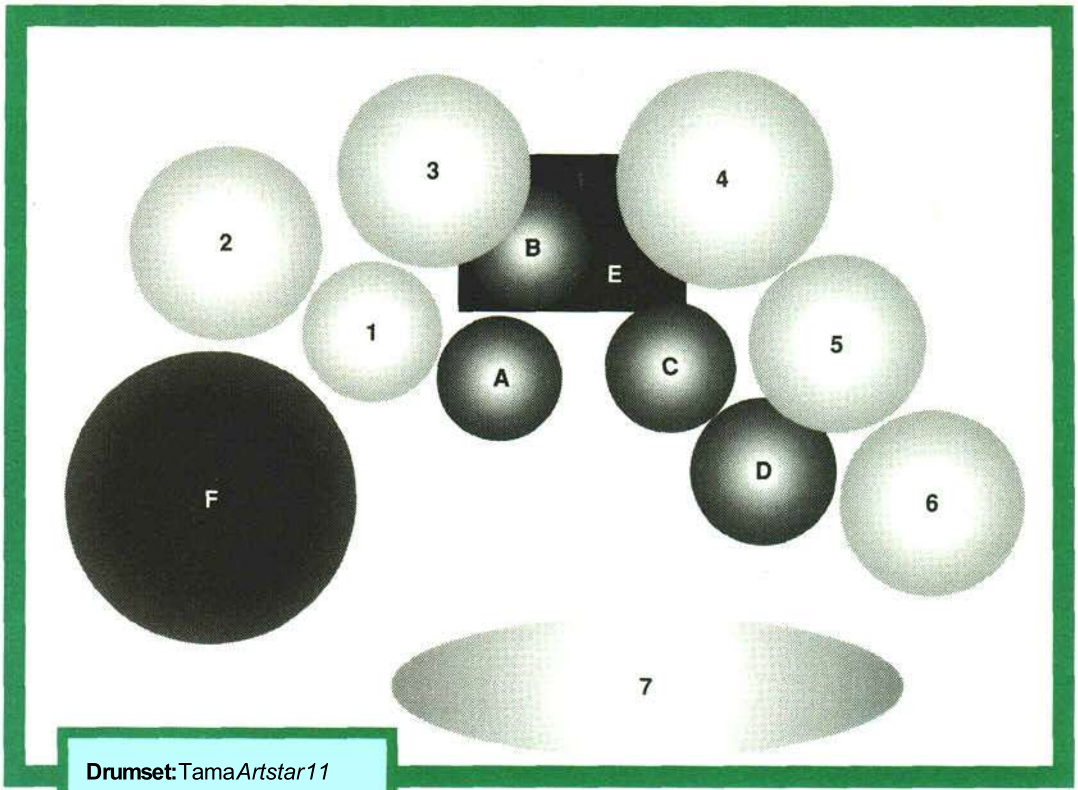
SR: I was totally relentless. I still am. I won't let anything bring me down or allow any roadblocks to freak me out. I got past that. At first I thought New York was the music center, and I realized very quickly that L.A. is really the center for sessions, for the studios, for meeting the managers and record producers. So my objective was to end up in Los Angeles. I knew I was going to go to Chicago, Indianapolis, back to New York and D.C., and even to Salt Lake City.

RF: What were you doing while you were living in these cities?

SR: Playing in different bands. I've been in a few in my time. I'm talking about at least eight cities where I set up shop. Obviously I would call ahead, or they were turned on to me through other musicians, and they'd make an offer. I ended up in Indianapolis in '76 with Roadmaster on Mercury Records. That was my first album, though I had done tons of demos at the end of the '60s and early '70s all over Boston, D.C., and New York. There were strange demos, rock demos, and fusion demos, which were the most fun.

If I had stayed in Indianapolis, though, I don't think I would have been as hungry. I would have really calmed down and laid back, figuring, "Hey, we're doing another record, that's fine." So it was a big move when I came to LA. There was a guy waiting for me who had been in a band on Casablanca. He was no longer with them, but he said he had a whole bunch of connections and said, "Wanna take a stab at it?" It was '77, and I never left. I moved back to Chicago to play the scene back there, but I always kept my place here.

So it turned out that he had slight connections, which was good enough to just get my feet wet, but it was still really hard times. From '77 to '79, it was pretty difficult. I did some sessions and demo work around here and played in some club bands, but it was tough. I would suggest to any musician coming to Los Angeles to make sure there is at least something waiting for you, some kind of setup. I did it the hard way. I thought there was something waiting, but there really wasn't. But I grinded it out for two years, doing everything, playing and living in a commune—all of that thing. I could get by on five bucks, but I was still playing every day. I had my drums set up somewhere every day. Then '79



Drumset: Tama *Artstar 11* in custom green sparkle finish.

A. 6 1/2 x 14 bell brass snare
B. 13 x 14 rack tom
C. 16 x 16 floor tom
D. 16 x 18 floor tom
E. 16 x 26 bass drum
F. 26" timpani

Cymbals: Zildjian.

1. 15" heavy hi-hats
2. 20" heavy crash
3. 20" heavy crash
4. 22" ping ride
5. 19" heavy crash
6. 20" heavy crash
7. 48" gong

Hardware: Drum Workshop hi-hat and bass drum pedals.
Heads: Remo CS (black dot) heads on snare drum and tops of all toms (no muffling), Remo *Ebony Ambassadors* on bottoms of toms. Remo coated *Ambassador* on bass drum batter head, and *Ebony Ambassador* on front. (There is one strip of felt on each head and a 1" piece of foam in the bottom of the drum for muffling.)
Sticks: Pro-Mark *2B* model, played with the butt end.

rolled around and the original bass player in Steppenwolf, Nick St. Nicholas, called. Something happened with that band where all five members owned the name, so when it broke up, each member took out a band on his own saying it was Steppenwolf, which was pretty strange. But he asked me to come out and offered me $100 a show to play every night every week with an extra $100 a week, which was going to be like $800 a week, and in '79 I was thinking, "Whoa!" Their drummer had split real quick, and they had this whole tour booked. I stayed for two years. I was glad to be in the money all of a sudden, but at the same time, I knew it was a dead end. I was doing an oldies show. It was all old Steppenwolf hits, like "Magic Carpet Ride" and "Born To Be Wild." The money was great, but at the end of the second year, I wanted to be branching out.

RF: What was it you were aiming for, what was the goal along the way?

SR: I've always been into musicians because of what I was listening to at a very early age. I've always been into "no holds barred musicians." I really respect Jeff Beck because he never tires himself out playing one kind of music. He keeps changing. He went from blues to rock and fusion, and he keeps going. I have a ways to go before I get recognized like that, but I would like to model myself after someone like Jeff Beck, where I could keep going from style to style, not being just a rock drummer or a fusion drummer. I would like to do a country gig, a blues gig, and everything. The niche I'm in right now is definitely the bombastic heavy drummer, and I can do that so easily. It's easy to do if you've been playing drums as long as I have, and it *should* be an easy gig. But I'm still searching for that time when I've made enough money so I can do a solo LP and not worry if the thing sells, and hire musicians like Stanley Clarke, Jeff Beck, and a keyboard player like Chick Corea, and just go for it. I know I can write material for an album like that because I'm really into it, but it will be a while before I get there. That's where I'm headed, though. It would be nice not to have to worry about sales.

RF: Let's get back to the trudge up to artistic expression. The Steppenwolf thing ended, and then what?

SR: The lead singer for that was Tom Holland; we both knew each other from those two years in L.A. We came back to Los Angeles, and he called me and told me about a band called the Boyzz from Illinois. They had been signed already, but they were re-forming and changing their name. They took the "oy" out and called it the Bzz, which was a difficult name to pronounce. But he called and said they were close to a deal with CBS, and I joined the Bzz in '81. I moved to Chicago, although I kept my apartment here in L.A., and I did that for about a year and a half. It was the first time I realized there were other people involved with our careers. If you don't have a good manager, you're screwed. I think the band really had a chance to do something. There was a strong single, and the producer, Tom Werman, was gung ho behind the band and so was the label, but there wasn't anybody manning the phone, a killer manager. A lot has to do with that, and it was an important realization. The Bzz died slowly but surely, and I came back to L.A. around '84 and got back into doing some sessions.

RF: How did you get into sessions?

SR: I just did it on my own. I put an ad in every trade, I answered every ad, and personally went to check everything out. If you just check them out long enough, you'll find something, some kind of session, even if it's not great paying. It will put you behind a kit to play. That's the main thing. Living in an apartment, I was trying to find a place to play, so I'd go to these places where they said they were just putting together bands, or doing demos where they could slide me 50 bucks. That was the beginning of '84, and I was doing this one session, and the bass player said, "I know of this gig, and you should call the lead singer and tell him you're in town and you're looking for a gig." He was talking about Ron Keel of Keel. I asked the bass player, "Does he have a drummer?" He said, "Yes, but I think he wants to get rid of him. He's already done an independent album, and he's getting ready to do another album for A&M with Gene Simmons producing." So I called Ron Keel and said, "You should kick your drummer out. I'll blow him out the door," or something like that. I got really ballsy on the phone.

RF: Couldn't you have rubbed him the wrong way with that kind of arrogance?

SR: Yes, but I just went for it. The bass player had said he knew I would get the gig, so I should act like it. So Ron said, "My drummer is out of town for a couple of days, so why don't you come by tonight?" I stuck my drums in the van and went right over, and I got the gig that night. They played the album for me, and I don't know, maybe it's from playing so long, but I have learned how to lock into a song immediately. I worked on that for a long time, how to sit and listen to a song and be able to play right away. So I listened to it and played it, and it was pretty basic metal. Metal was very big right then, and it was right up that alley. It showed me that if you think you can do it, call up and say, "I can do that. You should do yourself a favor and let me come over and play for an hour." Be a little cocky about it. Get behind yourself a little bit.

Photo by Lynn McAfee

RF: The story goes you had something like three days to learn this record?

SR: Yes, it was strange. I got the gig that first night, and Gene Simmons came in the second night. I knew Gene from back in '77 and '78, because the band I was with was trying to get him involved. It never worked, but I had met him and we had become friends. So that was really cool that we knew each other, and he said, "Are you going to be able to do this?" We were supposed to go in in a few days and I said, "Yes, I'll be ready."

RF: What did you do to get ready?

SR: I went home and listened to the tapes over and over again. I went into rehearsal each day for the next few days and I did it. They didn't have a big budget, so we went into the Record Plant, and Barbra Streisand was in the room we were supposed to be in, and she was going overtime. I kept looking at the clock because I knew they wanted me to do my tracks boom, boom, boom, right in a row. I didn't get in there to get my drum sounds until about 1:00 in the morning, so around 3:00 in the morning I did a quick soundcheck and I did all my tracks that night—11 tracks right in a row. I grinded it out. It was me and Gene in there, and I even did four or five tracks without guitars in there. I knew I had to do it, though.

RF: Which album was that?

SR: That was *The Right To Rock,* the first album they did. Gene and I were doing all the backgrounds on it too, because Gene sings great, obviously, and he said I had a good range to sing a lot of the backgrounds. I was supposed to sign contracts for band and management with Keel the next day after doing the backgrounds, when I got a call at the Record Plant while we were on a break. The guy said, "I can't tell you who I am." And I said, "Why?" And he said, "Because I know you're in there doing this album right now with Gene and Ron, and I don't want to screw that up." Here I am in the lounge area with the whole band there and he says, "How would you like to do a world tour with a world-class act?" I said, "Who are you talking about?" He said, "Believe me, it's a world-class act and it's going to be big." I said, "I'm supposed to sign management contracts tomorrow, so you'd better tell me who you are." He said, "Why don't you call me when you get home from the studio." It was Blackie Lawless. He told me he had heard through the grapevine how I came in and did the Keel album on such short notice. He told me they had just let their drummer go after doing the first album, and they had two weeks for some drummer to come in, get the look down, learn the whole show, and start to fit in before going to England.

RF: Was he offering you band membership?

SR: He said it would be on a contingency basis. I would do the world tour, and we'd evaluate it with management and everyone, and I'd become a member when we got back to the States. That didn't sound so good; I would have rathered they just embrace me, but that wasn't going to happen. So all of a sudden I had two cool things happening. It looked like a good package with Keel, with Simmons and Danny Goldberg running the show. I had done a gig with them, too, in that short span, and they had gone over really well. There was a big to-do about them. Then Blackie called and I made the decision to do the WASP thing. I had seen WASP two weeks before that, and I knew they were missing something. I knew they had something killer happening, but there was also something missing. They made it clear that it was the drummer, because they let him go. I saw the press they were getting, and they told me about the record deal and showed me their offices, and it was a step up from what Keel was doing at the time. As a career decision, I couldn't do anything but go with WASP.

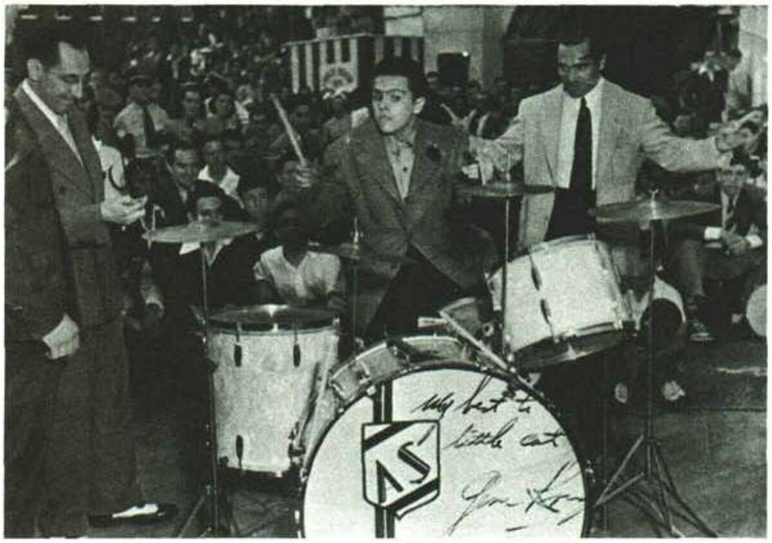
When I joined WASP and went on that tour that year, the Keel album came out. I got a copy sent to me, and there were the five band members with the new drummer. The last thing was "Duane Miller, drums and vocals." Underneath that in small print, it said "Steve Riley, additional drums and vocals"—and I did the whole album. I felt good about the fact that I came in and did the job they asked me to do. They wanted to do this album in a certain amount of time, and I felt good about that, which was the saving grace of the whole situation. But it was a career decision. Nobody is going to help you if you don't help yourself. I have friends who have turned killer gigs down thinking the band they were in was going to happen. That loyalty thing is great to a certain point, but you have to worry about screwing yourself.

RF: So you joined WASP with two weeks to

continued on page 70

Alvin Stoller

has done it all on drums.



Alvin Stoller at the 1939 World's Fair, where he won the Gene Krupa Drum Contest. Krupa is at right of photo.

Star of the big bands, jazz player, show percussionist, recording musician, and studio man for films and television, he has a background in music that exceeds most others, in depth and variety.

The love affair with drums began for Stoller when he was a small boy in Brooklyn in the 1930s. His intensity of interest grew as he got older.

The instrument ultimately gave his life depth and purpose and provided a means for making a good living, but money didn't enter into things when Stoller was a youngster.

Just *playing* was the thing.

by Burt Korall

Photo by Jaeger Kotos

As soon as he heard drums, he gave up piano lessons and turned all his attention to percussion. "I began banging on everything around the house. I drove my parents crazy," Stoller remembers. "I even took the stays out of my mother's corset and put them together with rubber bands so I could use them like a pair of brushes.

"My mother spoke to my piano teacher, who suggested I take drum lessons. That would determine whether my love was legit and whether I had talent for the instrument. I began studying with Willy Kessler, who played in theaters around town. We were together for three years. He was a beautiful man and a great teacher. He not only gave me lessons, he gave me on-the-job training. I would sit in the pit with him at the theater and watch while he played a show. It was so helpful to me later when I did stage shows and TV variety programs.

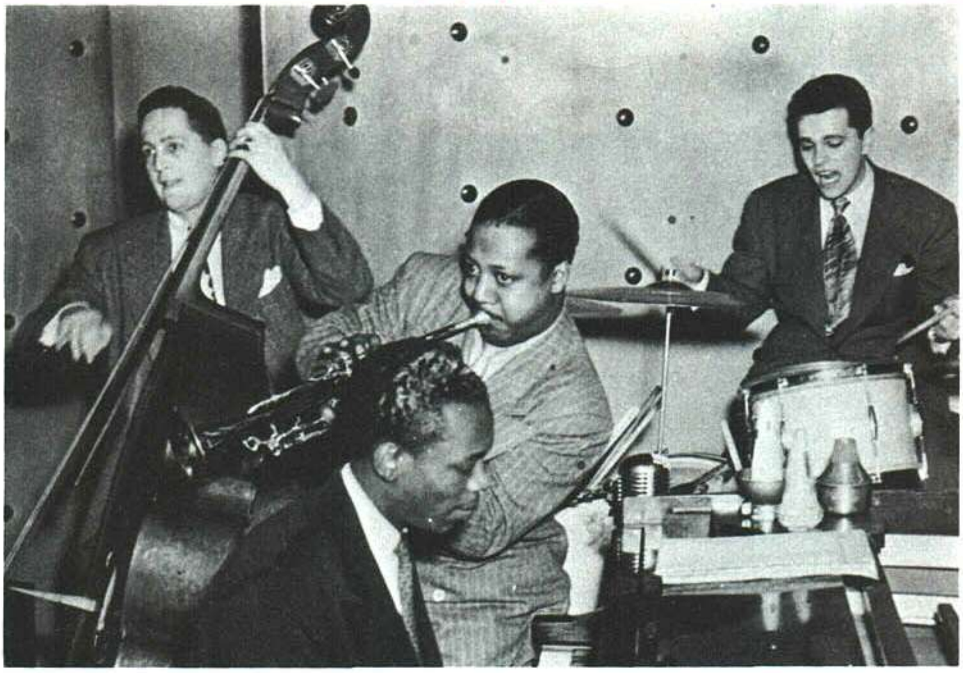
Above: Paul Smith (piano), Benny Goodman (clarinet), and Stoller performing in Salt Lake City.

"I also learned by listening to records. Chick Webb was my first influence. My brother Teddy and I bought the Webb record 'A Tisket A Tasket' for Ella Fitzgerald's vocal. The other side was 'Liza,' an instrumental on which Chick opens up. His sound and approach caught my attention. He did so much for the band; his time was firm, and his solos were a natural extension of the music. He had great technique. But it was *his feeling* that got to me. As far as I'm concerned, feeling is one of the key aspects of drumming, particularly jazz drumming.

"During that period, I also picked up a lot by listening to remote broadcasts by the big bands from hotels, ballrooms, and clubs. They came from all over the country, and that added to the excitement."

It was inspiring to be in New York in the 1930s, when Stoller got his start as a drummer. The ambience provided great motivation for the young musician. "Music was in the air in New York," Stoller reflects. "It was everywhere. The bands appeared at the presentation theaters—the Paramount, the Strand, the Capitol, the Roxy. Harlem and Greenwich Village were filled with music and musicians. It didn't matter what part of town you were in. Music was there to be enjoyed. And it was *real.*

"For the aspiring drummer, there also were the drum shops on Manhattan's 48th Street, in downtown Manhattan, and in Brooklyn. They were an inspiration. As soon as I walked into one of them, I was drawn to the drums and cymbals. I couldn't help but touch them. Generally I used any excuse to buy something—a pair of sticks or brushes. So when I went home, I retained the good feeling I had in the store. In addition, a drum shop was a place where you could talk drums with others who loved to play. That made you feel a part of the scene.



Above: *Stoller at the 3 Deuces Club on 52nd St. with (left to right) Sandy Block, Hank Jones, and Charlie Shavers.*

"I didn't become active as a drummer until I was 12. I would just listen to the bands rehearse, occasionally play, look at the drummers—that sort of routine."

Stoller's first major job as a professional—he was going on 13—was at a resort in the Catskill Mountains in upstate New York. He worked there for a summer, sleeping in the theater—the casino—on the premises, as did the rest of the staff of musicians and entertainers. He learned how to play a show and how to back various kinds of performers. This, too, would be very helpful later on.

When he returned home to Brooklyn, he took the drum chair in his brother Teddy's big band. "Teddy was the pianist; we used to play Count Basie stock arrangements—'Shorty George,' 'Jumpin' At The Woodside,' 'One O'Clock Jump'—and Benny Goodman things as well," he explains. "We'd work social clubs in Brooklyn, dances—we used to have a ball.

"There were a lot of great young musicians coming along at that time in Brooklyn and Manhattan—trumpeter Tony Faso, saxophonist Sam Marowitz, guitarist Chuck Wayne, my pal Shelly Manne. We all were very enthusiastic. If one of us got a good job, we were so proud. I remember when Shelly got a job with Bob Astor's band, then moved on to Bobby Byrne's band at the Pennsylvania Hotel. It was a thrill."

Stoller won a drum contest at the New York World's Fair in 1939. About 300 drum-

Below: Stoller on the movie set for The Fabulous Dorseys.

continued on page 82

'This Is Tomorrow"

by Ed Mann

Photo by Sergio Albonico

Recently some friends and I recorded an album for CMP records called *Get Up.* "This Is Tomorrow" is the first tune off of *Get Up* and is the subject of this *Sound Supplement.*

Compositionally, "This Is Tomorrow" loosely reflects several different influences, including South Indian drumming and rhythmic composition, rhythm "phasing" (a la composers Terry Riley, Steve Reich, Philip Glass, and others), and mbira and kalimba music from various parts of Africa. The final interpretation is within the context of electronic/acoustic pop-jazz.

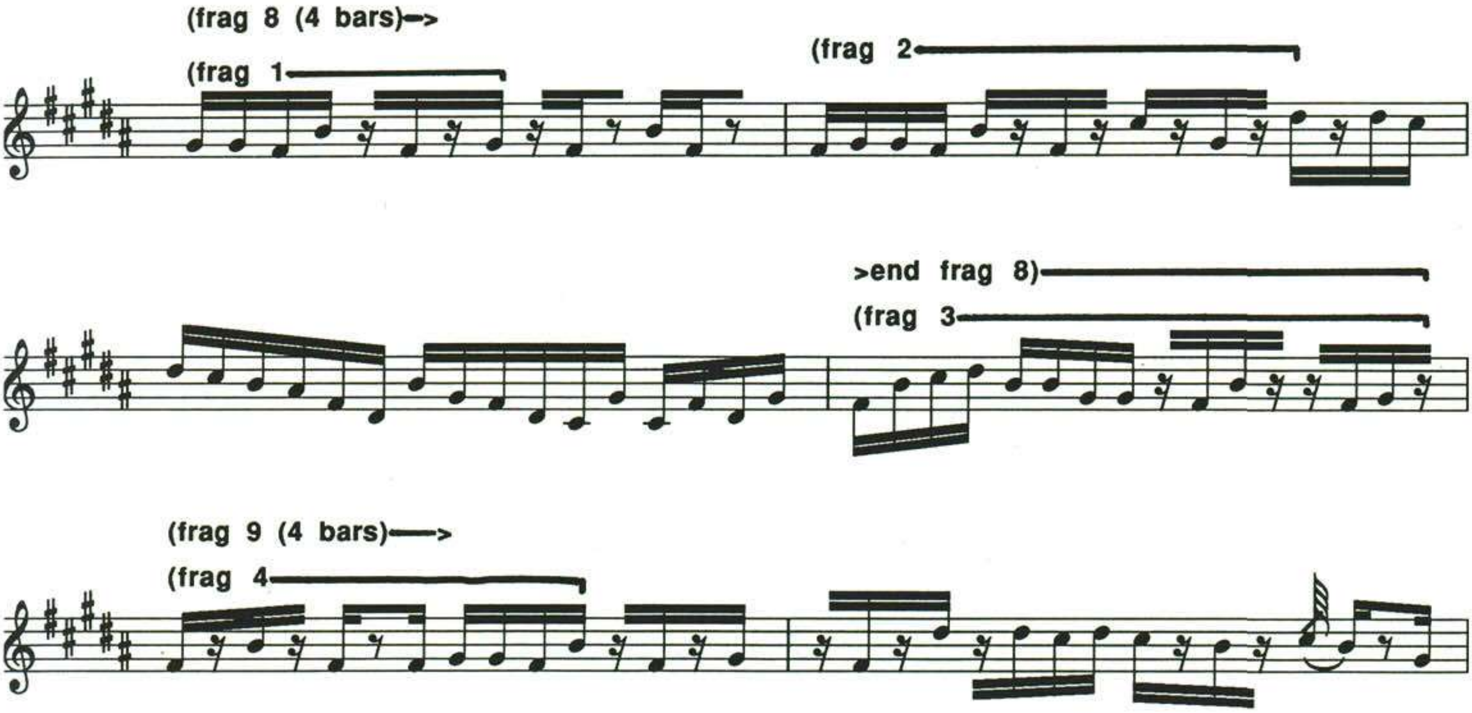
The seed of the tune is a 19-bar improvised rhythm/melody that was originally drummed up on a KAT mallet controller into a computer. (This was for observation and parts printing only; there is no machine sequencing involved in the final recorded performance.)

In order to turn this rhythm/melody into material for a "tune," the "master lick" is broken up into fragments, which gradually increase in size and eventually lead to the entire 19-bar phrase. (See fragment markings, Ex. A.) An eight-bar condensed version (Ex. B) and an ending pattern (C) follow.

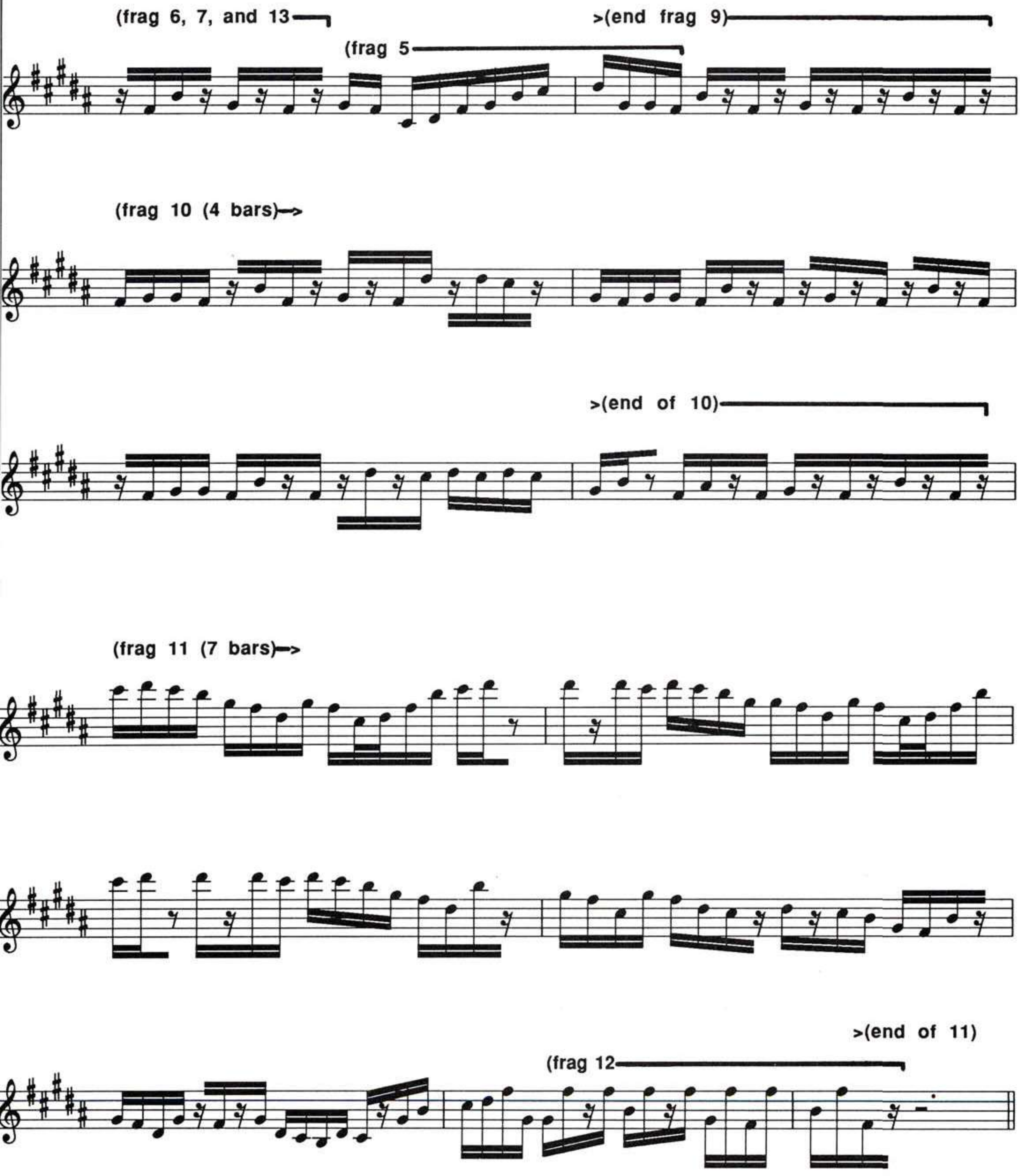
The players use these fragments improvisationally to move through the tune in kind of a "call and response" motion. Pattern B is played one bar out of phase between the mallets and guitar to create a temporary (safe) hypnotizing effect. Pattern C provides a steady rhythm ostinato for the horns to play over. The only compositional indication to the horns from the composer is to create contrast by playing long tones and to build with the drummer. At this point it's important to mention that all of the individuals who participated in this recording contributed creatively to the final performance. Thank you, guys.

I hope you enjoy listening to this music as much as we did creating it.

Example A

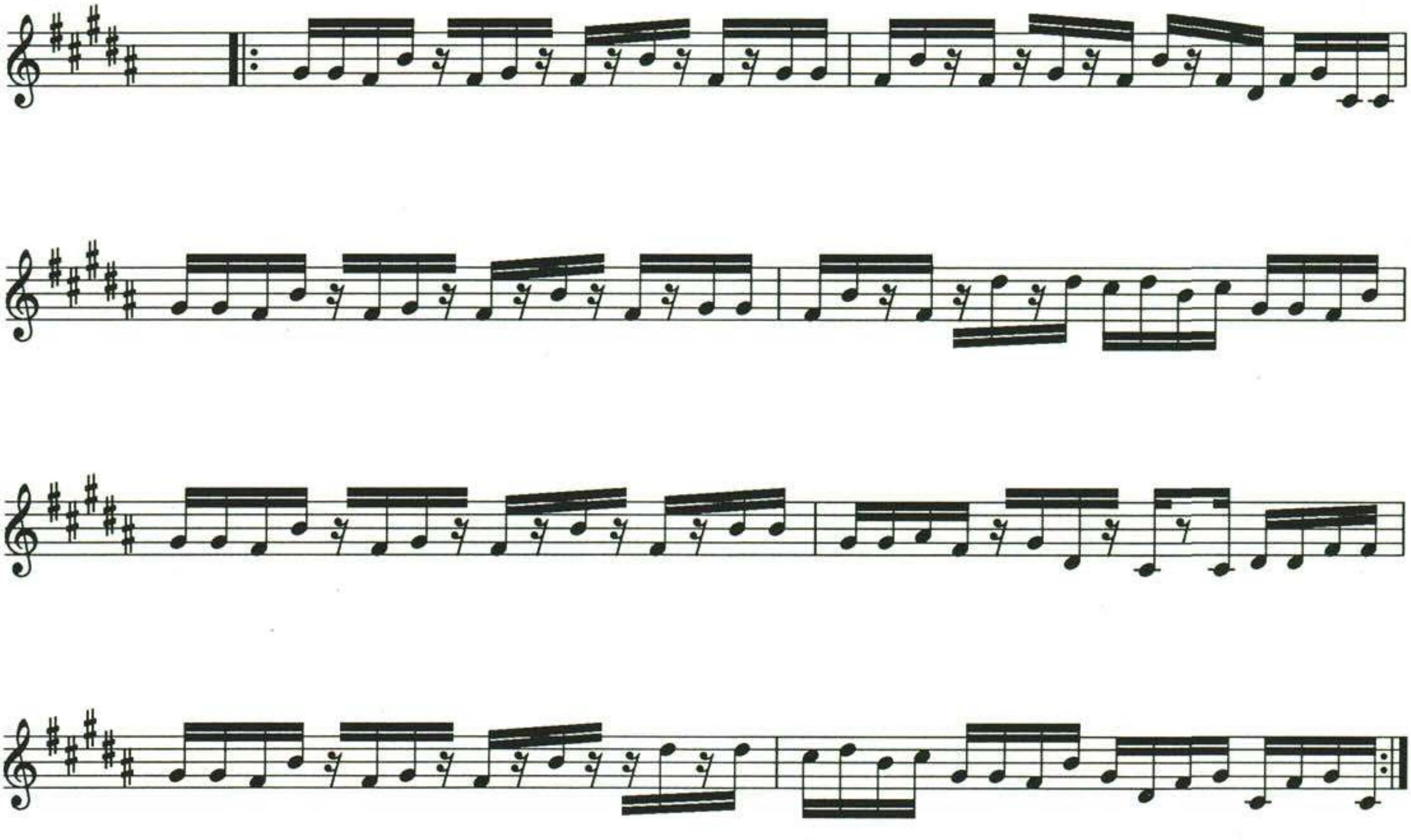


MD Sound Supplement

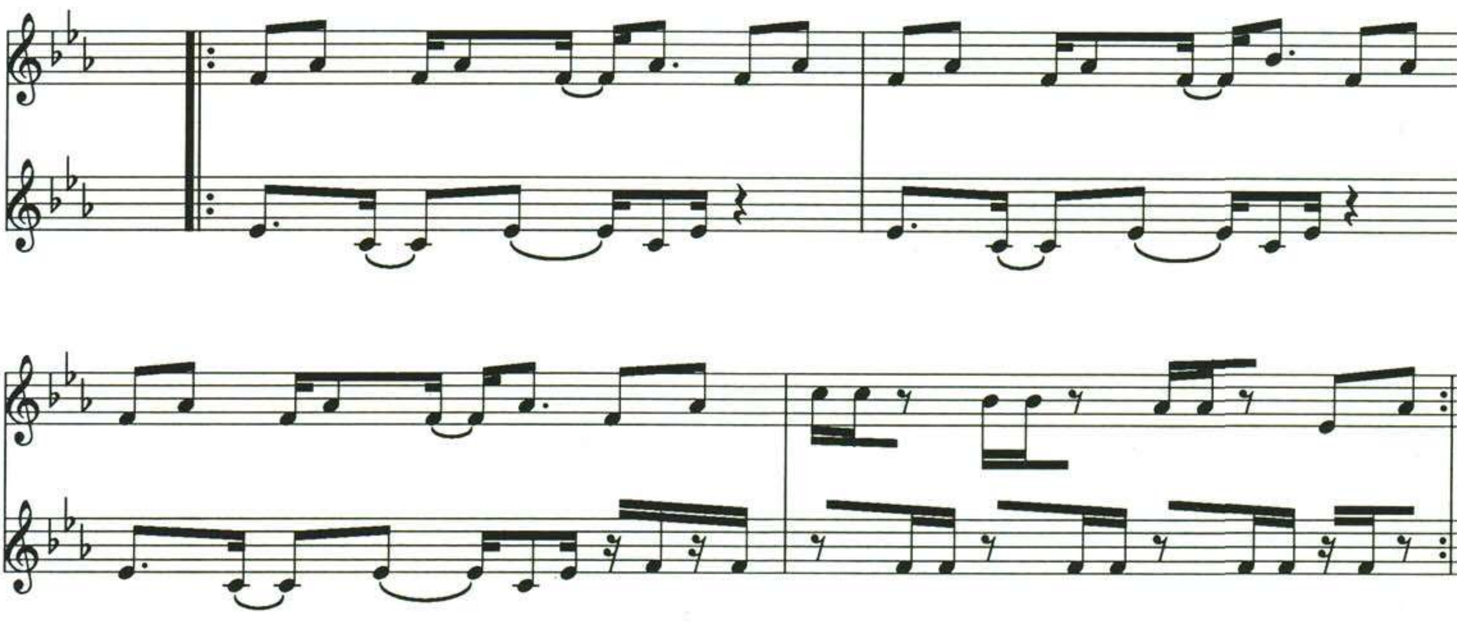

(frag 6, 7, and 13
>(end frag 9)
(frag 5
(frag 10 (4 bars)—>
>(end of 10)
(frag 11 (7 bars)—>
>(end of 11)
(frag 12

Drummers: If you would like to play this figure you may do so in several different ways: (1) Play the actual rhythm on a single drum or pad, hand to hand and with mixed sticking (your own). (2) Play the rhythm/melody around a drumkit, simulating as best as possible the melody and range by using different drums and playing techniques. (3) "Imply" the rhythm/melody underneath a constant time (ride) figure.

Example B



Example C



Style And Concept

by Chad Wackerman

Many drummers have asked me how one creates a style. That's a very difficult question to answer. Most of the time, style seems to be a natural occurrence caused by the type of music you have listened to, the type of things you dislike, and the attitude and personality you put into your playing. With many musicians it is not anything that is preconceived: They simply play what they like to hear.

One truly great thing about playing music is that it changes all the time, and everyone makes it sound different. You can hear ten different drummers play the same pattern, and no two will sound exactly the same, no matter how simple the pattern. Like any art form, what we consider to be "good" is a very personal thing. What I might consider to be a brilliant performance you might consider worthless. I, however, prefer that attitude to that of some sports, where whoever is fastest is best.

Since in music faster doesn't necessarily mean better, we listen to other things musicians play to decide what we like. It is their style that separates them. Some people have extremely distinctive styles. You know immediately who is playing without having to see them.

What makes them sound so distinctive? Some people relate it to the type of instrument and tuning they use (Tony Williams' ride cymbal, Stewart Copeland's snare drum, etc.). That's not it, though. A friend of mine who is a great guitarist came to an Allan Holdsworth rehearsal, and Allan let him play his guitar through his rig. Not only did the notes sound different, but it sounded as if all of the equipment had changed as well!

So it's obviously something besides equipment; it's what you play and what you don't play, the way you use your technique, the way you strike a cymbal or drum, where you place each beat, the balance between feet and hands—most of all, though, I believe it's your concept.

Your technique is your musical vocabulary. You need technique to be able to play anything you can think of musically. If you have all of these creative ideas in your head, but you can't execute them, they won't do you any good. There is no replacement for long hard hours on the practice pad or set.

If you're at the point in your playing where you can play at least most of the things you can think up, then the problem shifts to what to play and where to play it. Now it is time to start thinking more conceptually than technically.

One of the most obvious ways to distinguish between drummers is the way they play fills. When I play with a band, I never consciously play a practiced fill. The reason I don't is because by the time I get to that fill, someone else in the band might have played something just before it that will have made my fill inappropriate. Worse, it will simply sound practiced.

So where do I get ideas for fills or solos? I often get them from the piece of music that I'm playing, an idea may come from something another musician is playing, or I may invent a phrase that will fit into the style of the music. Now, if you decide to try to play off some of the other band members, remember to use taste. There is nothing more destructive and upsetting to a soloist than another musician bashing out every little rhythmical phrase that he or she can recognize. If I hear a rhythmical phrase played by somebody in the band, I will often recognize it, but not play it in unison with them. Rather, I will play a counterpart to it, play some of the accents of their phrase (not all of them), or play some type of answer to it.

In this month's *Sound Supplement,* you will hear a piece by Ed Mann from his album, *Get Up.* I decided to approach this piece with a basic groove, but also play random fills that relate to the piece itself. Notice that the melody is very rhythmic, with mostly 16th-note subdivisions. Also note that there is lots of space where the band is playing a groove in between the melody passages. I tried to play fills that were related to the types of melodic rhythms that Ed was playing. In this type of playing situation, you may also try to play some of the actual rhythms of the melody, but try to think of them as short syncopations that can be shifted to start on any beat. Displacing a short, recognizable rhythm a 16th note or 8th note forward or backward from where it was originally heard can create some interesting fills. Also, you can play part of a melody or bass line in a fill, actually "quoting" something heard earlier in the piece.

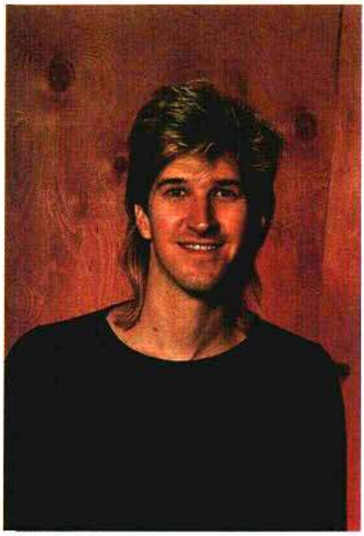


Photo by Rick Malkin

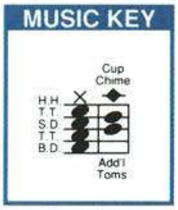
With all these ways to play fills that will relate to the music you're playing, you can now think about the way you're going to orchestrate your fill. What I mean when I say "orchestrate" is to arrange the voices of the drumkit into long sounds, short sounds, and high- to low-pitched sounds. You can then play phrases accordingly, as a trumpet or guitar player might. Fast runs (a dense flurry of notes) speak better on instruments with short sounds such as snare drums, bass drums, timbales, and small, quickly decaying cymbals. Sustained sounds—larger cymbals or open, long decaying toms—are better for playing notes of longer durations. A melodic instrument plays shorter-duration notes on a fast run, and longer, more legato notes for larger note values.

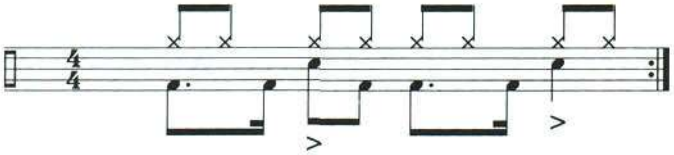
Don't only play things that you get from other drummers. When you practice, you can work on duplicating patterns from piano players, guitarists, and other instrumentalists. It is a very simple and easy concept, but you may find that categorizing all of the instruments in your drumset according to their timbres will help you come up with some very different fills.

When I played "This Is Tomorrow," I combined four different concepts:

1. Groove playing
2. Linear drumming
3. Playing as a drummer and percussionist at the same time
4. Call and response playing

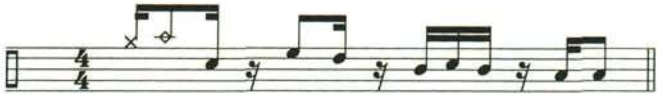
The first concept is very obvious: Play the groove, beat, or pattern that will make the piece feel good. This sets up the mood of the piece. In some instances, this is all that is necessary. In this tune, I played this funk groove:

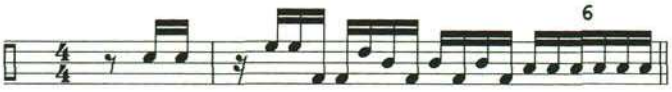




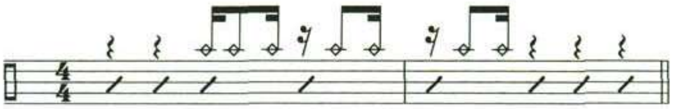
The second concept, linear drumming, is where most of the fills come in. Often I don't keep my feet playing an ostinato pattern and play a fill with my hands over it. Instead, I choose to incorporate my feet into the "line" that I play. When playing in a linear fashion, no two limbs hit together on the same count:

continued on next page





Playing as a drummer and percussionist, I will utilize percussion instruments or samples that are not drum-type sounds. The type of things I play will sound more like an overdubbed percussion part, in contrast to the linear concept. On this piece, I used two Paiste cup chimes, a low-pitched electronic bass drum sample, and a gunshot sample. The following is the type of rhythm I played on the cup chimes over the groove pattern on "This Is Tomorrow":

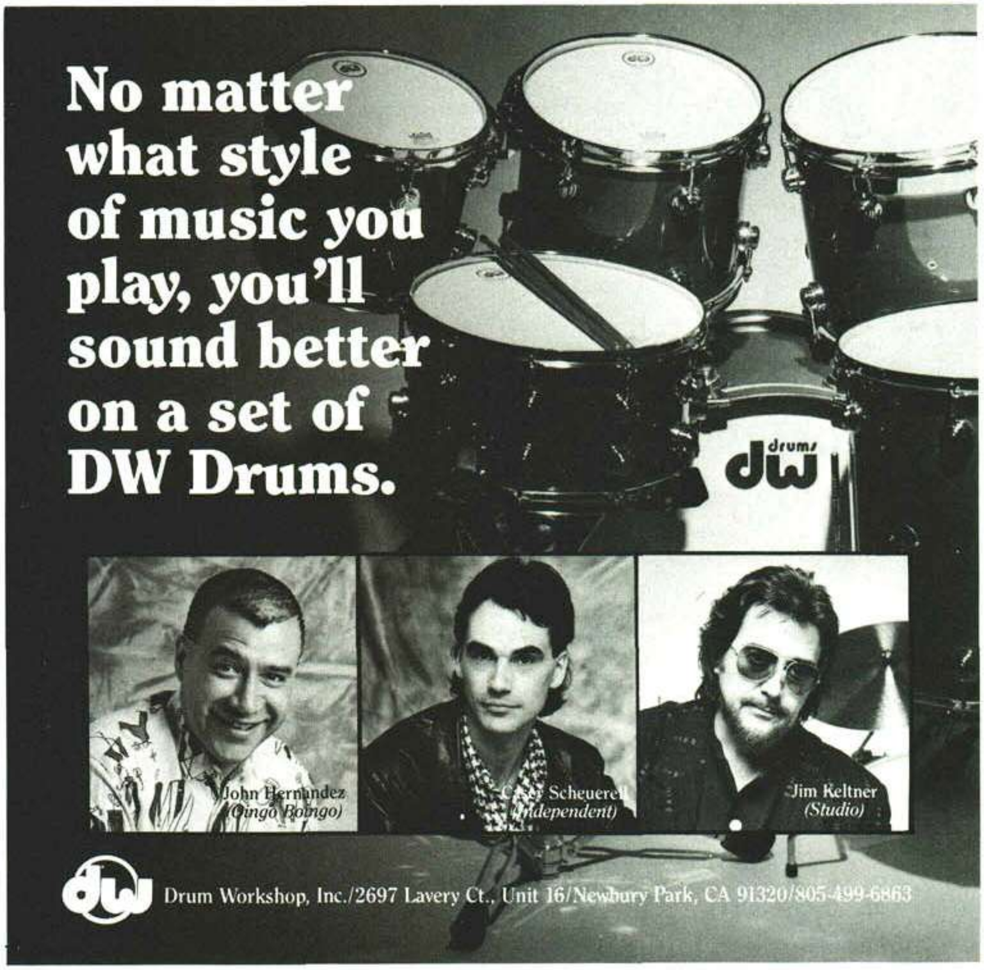


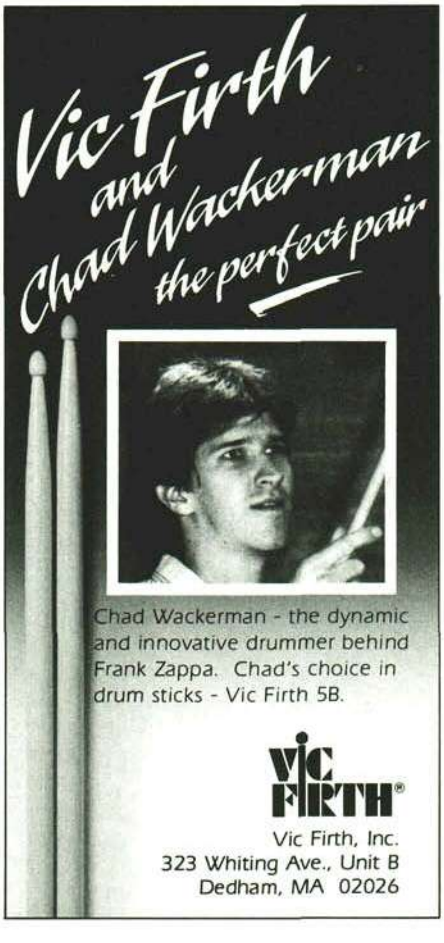
The call-and-response concept deals with the idea of taking something already stated in the music and playing a fill that answers back to it. Just as you can have a conversation with another person, you can have the same type of situation musically. You can spot quite a few examples of this in the *Sound Supplement where* I spontaneously played short fills that replied to some of the shorter melodic phrases that Ed was playing.

Any time you play music that has "open spaces" or "open sections" to it, there is room for interpretation. No two drummers will sound alike playing a piece like this. Each has his own concept, his own personality, and his own attitude that he puts into the music. I find that most concepts are comprised of a list of things not to play. If you know what not to play, you must then create something to replace what you would have done. I mentioned four basic concepts that I applied to this piece, but it would have sounded different if I had changed the percentages of each concept.

There are times when you only want one concept to prevail. There are an endless number of unexplored concepts to confront and an infinite amount of music that has yet to be uncovered. Next time you find yourself playing the same old licks, try to give yourself a new set of rules, and make some new statements in your drumming!

Credits: "This Is Tomorrow"
Written by Ed Mann.
Big Accumulator—ASCAP/Contemp Music—GEMA.
Produced by Ed Mann, Kurt Renker, and Walter Quintus.
Recorded by Walter Quintus at Ztudio Zerkall in West Germany.
(P) and (C) 1988 CMP Records. Digital recording.
Musicians:
Ed Mann: marimba, vibes, orchestra bells, electronic mallets with MIDI samplers and synthesizers, gongs.
Chad Wackerman: drums, cymbals, and sampled percussion.
Doug Lunn: electric bass.
Mike Hoffman: electric guitar.
Walt Fowler: trumpet and flugelhorn.
Bruce Fowler: trombone.


No matter what style of music you play, you'll sound better on a set of DW Drums.
dw drums
John Hernandez (Oingo Boingo)
Scheuerell (Independent)
Jim Keltner (Studio)
Drum Workshop, Inc./2697 Lavery Ct., Unit 16/Newbury Park, CA 91320/805-499-6863


Vic Firth and Chad Wackerman the perfect pair
Chad Wackerman - the dynamic and innovative drummer behind Frank Zappa. Chad's choice in drum sticks - Vic Firth 5B.

VIC FIRTH®
Vic Firth, Inc.
323 Whiting Ave., Unit B
Dedham, MA 02026

Paiste

PAiSTe
CYMBALS SOUNDS GONGS

IAN PAICE
"They are like a whole new generation of cymbals — for every generation of players. There is one cymbal for every style of music."

RICKY LAWSON
"They sound wonderful, really. These cymbals feel very natural and they speak immediately."

FREDY STUDER
"Making these cymbals is like making music, it's art. With these sounds, Paiste jumped above its own shadow into a complete new cymbal world."

PIERRE FAVRE
"These cymbal sounds will inspire drummers to tune their instruments accordingly. The sound of the drums has to be richer to complement the cymbals."

TERRY BOZZIO
"I've never heard anything like this! These sounds are hypnotic, it's a big mystery."

STEVE JORDAN
"I am impressed by the dynamic range. I can play soft and bring out the actual beauty of the cymbal. I can play loud and it does not sound harsh but just like a big wall of sound. Usually you can not get both out of a cymbal."

ED MANN
"These cymbals respond quickly and evenly over a wide range. Because the harmonics are so clear, it is possible for the drummer/percussionist to create new extremes in sound and color."

RONALD SHANNON JACKSON
"It's like when they went from black & white to technicolor. These cymbal sounds generate the same step."

JON HISEMAN
"Marvelous! Very musical sounding cymbals with a beautiful transparency."

DANNY GOTTLIEB
"Congratulations! It's got to be the fullest range of sound I've ever heard. Now there's an even wider set of tonal colors to choose from."

SHEILA E.
"Crispy, crispy, crispy. They're like right there in your face, and I don't have to play them so hard."

STEWART COPELAND
"These cymbals speak very quickly, with power and they have dignity."

LARRY MULLEN JR.
"The new cymbals give more response and have more attack than anything I've played before."

BILLY HIGGINS
"Right, right, right! Great jazz cymbals! I don't have to put rivets in these, they're already in there."

MARK HERNDON
"You know how it feels when you just get out of the shower and you're nice and clean and fresh? That's how I feel about these new cymbals. Brilliant!"

AL FOSTER
"You feel like playing with these cymbals. They've got fantastic stick rebound. They just swing by themselves."

BILL BRUFORD
"Amazing instruments. They are like an orchestra. Very lovely."

DAVID GARIBALDI
"Excellent! Outstanding cymbal sounds. Definitely more volume, more definition, a wider dynamic range, the low end is a remarkable improvement. They just sound bigger."

ALEX VAN HALEN
"I've waited for a long time for a cymbal like this."

JEFF PORCARO
"Unbelievable! Gorgeous! It's got everything. This is the biggest cymbal innovation I've heard of in my lifetime. It's a cymbal revolution."

CHAD WACKERMAN
"These cymbals speak immediately, and have a brilliant shimmer at the very top end of the sound. I have never heard such beautifully rich sounding cymbals before."

NICKO McBRAIN
"Really serious cymbals. They've got power, volume and real precision and they've got that magic. It's a winner!"

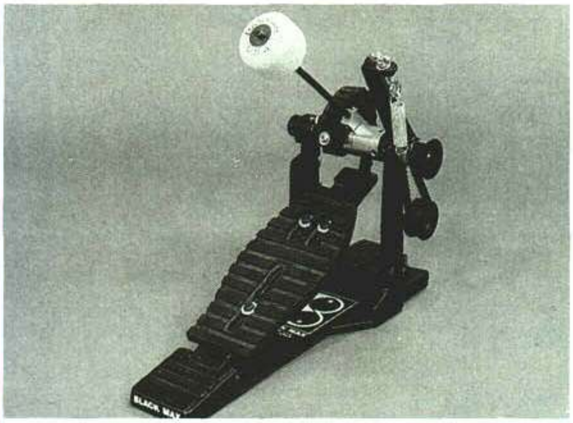
LEON NDUGU CHANCLER
"This is the first cymbal that has a wide dynamic range without being overpowering. They cut through in all dynamic situations with the same clarity. In the studio, they are fantastic."

JIM KELTNER
"They feel like pretty old cymbals. They feel like they have already been broken in — a beautiful, mellow, crystal kind of sound, smooth and thin."

For a copy of our new brochure, write to us at Paiste America, 460 Atlas Street, Brea, CA 92621

PRODUCT CLOSE-UP

The Black Max Pedal



The *Black Max* pedal, from XL Specialty Percussion Products, bills itself as "The World's Only Twin Eccentric Pedal." This could be a double-edged claim. Does it mean the pedal has two offset something-or-others, or that it's twice as strange as any other pedal? It does have more nuts, bolts, set screws, springs, slots, and other mechanical fittings than anything this side of your old Erector set. So it might seem a bit daunting upon first examination—something along the lines of: "Do I play this thing or try to disarm it?"

Not to worry; it really isn't all *that* complicated. As a matter of fact, a sheet of instructions provided for me by the pedal's designer, Luke Jacobson, starts off by saying: "Don't be afraid. The adjustments of the *Black Max are, for* the most part, the same as those of conventional pedals. However, now, for the first time, each of these adjustments is completely independent [of the other]."

And just what kind of adjustments are we talking about? Would you believe Beater Stroke (the amount of stroke between the beater's point of rest and the drumhead), Spring Tension (as with standard pedals), Spring Timing (when the concentrated spring tension happens within the stroke), Footplate Position (where the contoured footplate sits atop the drive plate for maximum foot comfort and power), Footplate Stroke Length (five settings that adjust how much the footplate depresses to achieve each stroke), Footplate Angle at Impact (which is just what it sounds like), and a nifty additional feature called the Acoustic Simulator (which I'll get into more later). Add to these the variables of beater type and beater height, and you have a pedal that can achieve almost any conceivable combination of actions for "that personalized feel." The intent of both Luke Jacobson and XL's Neal Graham was to create a pedal that could be absolutely all things to all people—no small task, considering that a bass drum pedal is perhaps the single most personal piece of hardware on any drummer's kit, and no two drummers are ever happy with the same one.

As a matter of fact, this review turned out to be an education in pedal design for me, since I wound up reviewing a "work in progress." No fewer than three versions were sent to me during the review process, with various changes and improvements made to each one.

By way of description, I'd have to say that the *Black Max* is a big pedal, at a time when smaller, lighter pedals are more in vogue. But it has to be big to incorporate all of its mechanical features. The heelpiece of the pedal is actually a part of the molded steel baseplate, to which the yoke of the pedal is attached. (As a result, the pedal cannot fold up in any way, making it a bit cumbersome to pack up or carry.) The tension spring is adjustable from above, which is convenient, but the hoop clamp is tightened by a thumbscrew at the outside lower right of the yoke. It's more convenient than one under the footboard, but you still have to get down pretty low to reach it. Other than those two adjustments, all of the other adjustments on the *Black Max* must be made either sitting on the floor (if the pedal is in place) or by removing the pedal from the drum entirely. This can be a bit tedious during the initial fine-tuning process, but adjusting the *Black Max* is something like setting up a rack system for the first time: It takes forever to get it right, but once you do, it's that way for good. An Allen wrench is supplied with the pedal; you'll also need a small slotted screwdriver and a small crescent wrench to complete all your adjustments.

The footplate is a contoured and grooved piece of high-impact plastic that can slide backwards and forwards on the steel plate that actually drives the pedal. This particular adjustment is for comfort only; it has no real effect on the action of the pedal since the steel drive plate remains the same length no matter where the footplate is adjusted. I found one small problem with the footplate: Its deep grooves and non-slip surface tended to grab the sole of my shoe, making it difficult to play double strokes with a "glancing" motion. Not everyone plays that way, so not everyone would experience that problem, but it's worth noting. I'd like to see XL offer a smooth, non-grooved footboard as an option.

I made a little dig earlier about the "Twin Eccentric" name; I should explain that what it really refers to is the heart of the *Black Max's* drive action: twin eccentric cams that are adjustable in their relationship to one another. Where most pedals have a spring that pulls against a single cam (thus turning the pedal's axle), the *Black Max's* spring attaches to a drive strap wound around two cams that are independently adjustable. Depending on how you position these cams, you can get a spring pull that would tow a semi, or a fairly light spring response that requires only a gentle touch to swing the beater. Add to this the fact that you can adjust where, in the beater's stroke, the spring tension hits maximum, and you see that the *Black Max* could serve a rock stamper or a jazz lightfoot equally well.

Luke's introduction mentioned the independence of the *Black Max's* adjustments. That's the feature of the pedal that most appealed to me. I hate it when I have the beater throw, pedal travel, and spring tension just perfect on my current pedal, and then a strap stretches or breaks. Putting on a new strap changes the pedal travel and the beater throw, so I have to change the spring tension to accommodate them. Consequently, everything is uncomfortable until the new strap stretches to a certain point and my foot gets used to the pedal all over again. With the *Black Max,* this cannot happen. First of all, the drive strap is a fiber-reinforced rubber material, somewhat similar to auto fan belts. It's not as likely to break as leather straps, nor as likely to stretch as woven nylon—yet it doesn't feel as rigid as a chain. Second, every element I discussed—beater throw, pedal travel, spring tension, etc.—can be set independently from the other. This means that *you* can determine how far your beater moves from its resting point to the drumhead and how far the pedal depresses in order to get it there; that isn't determined by how long your drive strap is. Pedal angle at impact can also be adjusted, giving just the right footboard angle for maximum comfort and power.

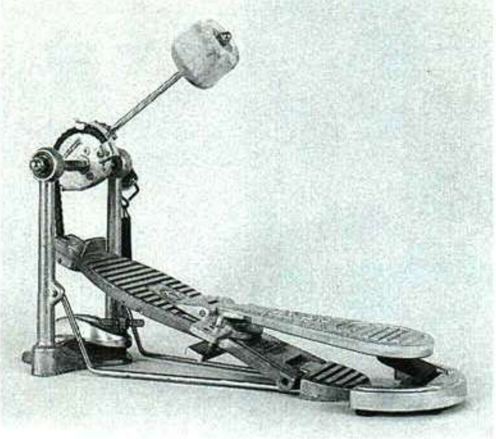
The Acoustic Simulator is a device that Luke created with the idea of the pedal being used on electronic kick drum pads. Many drummers have complained that playing against an electronic kick is very much like playing against a brick wall. So Luke fitted the *Black Max* with a spring-loaded feature that allows the beater to "flex" upon impact. This gives a more natural feel when playing against a hard surface, and provides an added benefit when playing an acoustic drum: Since the beater can "flex," it doesn't come to a dead stop against the drumhead (which can serve to choke off the head). The result is a noticeable increase in low end and resonance from the bass drum. Drummers who like to "play into" their drumheads and so wouldn't want their beaters to flex could simply disengage the Acoustic Simulator; they would still have the option to use it if they happened to play an electronic kick drum. And for those who would have absolutely no use for such a feature, a lower-priced version of the *Black Max* is available without it.

Another unique feature of the *Black Max* is its Backcheck. Originally, this was a non-adjustable lobe used to stop the motion of the driveshaft (and the swingback of the beater) upon the pedal's return. I found that this device stopped the return of the beater in such an abrupt way that it interfered with my footwork on the pedal. Like most drummers (I believe), I rely on the return action of the beater to put the footboard in the right place for my next downstroke. The timing of my footwork is based on this. When the first couple of *Black Max* versions didn't return in the manner I was familiar with, I couldn't get any quickness from them; they seemed slow and heavy in their action. Luke must have received this same response from several other drummers from whom he was gathering input, because he came up with a way to overcome the problem. The new version incorporates a spring (separate from the pedal's drive spring) that still *controls* the return of the beater, but does not stop it abruptly. With this adaptation, I found the pedal much more natural and comfortable to play. It may be that the earlier version was more mechanically efficient in theory, but sometimes a designer has to adapt theory to suit the idiosyncrasies of the consumer. The newer version of the *Black Max* has done just that, and it now feels wonderful to use. (For the sake of clarification, I should point out that our photo shows one of the earlier versions; all current models will incorporate the new return feature.)

I can't say that the *Black Max* is the perfect bass drum pedal; there are just too many drummers out there who demand different things from their pedals for any one product to be perfect. But I can say that the *Black Max* is the most versatile, adjustable, and user-friendly pedal I've come across. It's a bit big and awkward to carry, and it will exasperate you for a while until you master the subtleties of its adjustments. But once you've gotten everything tweaked just the way you like it, I think you'll have a friend for life. Owing to the last-minute design changes I mentioned, list pricing for the *Black Max* had not been established as we went to press. However, by the time you read this, the pedal should be available at your local retail drum shop. In the meantime, you can get more information directly from XL Specialty Percussion, P.O. Box 8304, Ft. Wayne, Indiana 46898.

—Rick Van Horn

The Vruk



For years, I've been wondering why someone hasn't developed a bass drum pedal you can play with your heel as well as your toes. (If you're like me, you've probably noticed that you can do certain things faster and more accurately with your heel.) Recently, to my surprise, I came across a unique new invention from England called the *Vruk* that comes very close to that concept.

The *Vruk* is an add-on heel plate that attaches to any normal bass drum pedal about two-thirds of the way down the footplate, with no modification needed. A bent steel spring underneath this heel plate enables the player to depress the pedal with a heel action, thus transferring force towards the beater and striking the drum. Normal playing with the front of the foot is not affected. This facilitates a heel-to-toe technique that makes playing doubles, triplets, or merely faster bass drum patterns very easy. There is a trade-off, though, in that a slight adjustment in your playing technique might be necessary to employ the heel-to-toe method. If you already play in this manner, the *Vruk* will be easier to master.

The *Vruk* was invented by Vuk Vukovic, a 31-year-old Yugoslavian drummer currently living in England. At the age of 16, Vuk was playing Bulgarian and Macedonian folk music with a Yugoslavian band that incorporated many odd time signatures into their music. Normally, the rhythmic patterns are played on the snare drum, but he tried to split them between bass drum and snare. Some parts of the music were very fast, and it was not possible for him to play the pedal that quickly. One day—while watching an old movie with Fred Astaire doing his marvelous tap-dancing—Vuk came up with the main principle of the *Vruk.* Lack of funds put the idea to rest for a while, but later, after developing various prototypes, Vuk found a partner in engineer James Reed. The first finished *Vruk* came out of the die in late 1988.

Vuk sent me one of his models to try, along with a demonstration video of himself using the *Vruk* in a drumkit application. Vuk's demo was on a twin-bass kit, with *Vruks* attached to both pedals. The result was accurate *double-stroke rolls* on the two bass drums—a feat that could *never* be accomplished in the normal manner.

A bit of practicing is required with the *Vruk* in order to get used to the minor technique change needed. Vuk told me that to get to the level demonstrated on the video took him five months. Therefore, the possibilities with the *Vruk* depend solely upon the drummer's initiative to work with it. I've had the *Vruk* with me for a few months, and am beginning to get it down with only intermittent practice. From watching the video, and working on the technique myself, I've found that the *Vruk* allows double-bass-drum effects to be played on one bass drum quite easily. The *Vruk* is not a shortcut to faster playing, but rather an aid to inducing faster patterns with less strain. (The *Vruk* can also be attached to a hi-hat pedal, and will work in the same manner as on a bass drum pedal.)

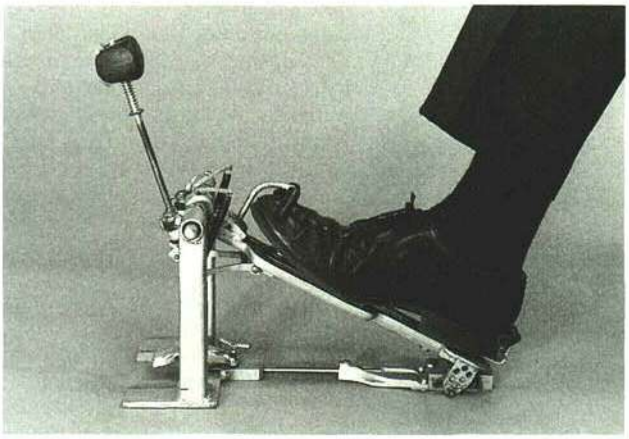
The *Vruk* has patent applications in several countries, and is currently available in English drum shops. A U.S. distributor is currently being sought. The unit is available in aluminum finish or in black at retail prices of £40 and £44, respectively (approximately $72 and $79 U.S.). All told, the *Vruk* is a relatively inexpensive drum pedal accessory that opens up a wealth of possibilities for drummers to create new and interesting rhythmic patterns on the drumkit. Vuk Vukovic has invented a totally new product, and I hope someone in the U.S. picks up on the *Vruk* to unleash upon American drummers. For more information, contact Vruk International Ltd., 112 Longhill Road, Catford, London, SE6 1UA, England.

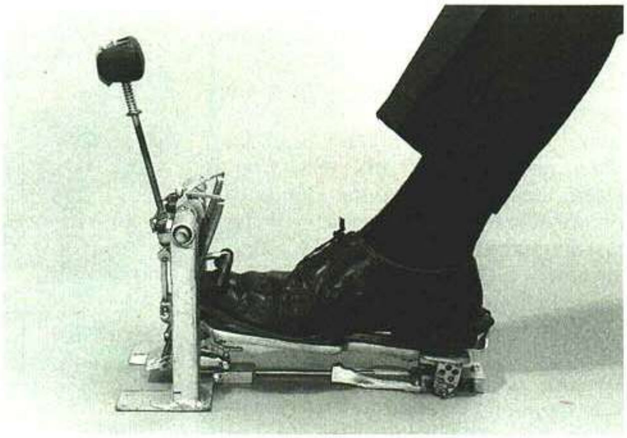
—Bob Saydlowski, Jr.

continued on next page

Drums ON SALE
Says It All...
GIGANTIC SAVINGS
Get on Mailing List
748 Robinwood Drive (College Plaza)
Hagerstown, MD 21740-6509
1-301-733-DRUM (3786)

The Upbeat Pedal





This particular review is a little out of the ordinary for this department, since the subject is not yet a commercially available product. But since we have another device designed to achieve the same results—and yet totally different in concept—reviewed elsewhere in this issue, it seemed appropriate to include the *Upbeat* pedal at this time.

Designed by an inventor who goes by the name of Jib, the *Upbeat* pedal is a fairly conventional-looking bass drum pedal that has been adapted to create a beater strike on both the downstroke and the upstroke as well—hence its name. The essential operational elements of the pedal that make this double-action possible are a double-spring, double-pull linkage system and footplate attachments for securing the heel and toe to the pedal's footboard.

The principle of the *Upbeat* pedal is simple: The player secures his or her foot to the footboard using the over-the-toe toe stop and the adjustable heel stop, and then plays the pedal with a flat-footed style, rocking the foot at the ankle. A step down produces one beat; lifting the foot back up produces a second beat.

The *execution* of this principle is not quite as simple as it sounds; it does require that the player have complete facility with a flat-footed (or more familiarly, "heel-down") technique. Also, it helps to have a fairly large foot, since the leverage achieved by a longer foot makes it easier to get a powerful beat on the upstroke. Jib has made the foot-locking device adjustable, and has also provided different footboard-travel settings at which double strokes may be achieved, but I still had to move my fairly small foot through a pretty wide up-and-down arc to get the Upbeat stroke. I normally play both heel-down (at low volume) and heel-up (for power), but I still was uncomfortable at first with the ankle movement this pedal required. However, any totally new device requires new techniques to operate it, and I'm sure that with enough time, I could adapt my playing style to achieve some dramatic results with this pedal.

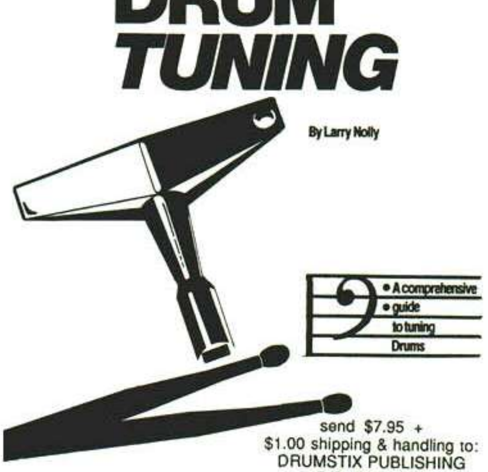
I mentioned the varied footboard settings. By simply lifting the lower end of the footboard up a bit, the entire footboard can slide in or out of four slots. Depending on which slot is chosen, you can have single-stroke (downstroke) action only, two settings at which singles or doubles can be played (depending on how far up you lift your foot), and one setting at which virtually only double strokes can be played. (At this setting, its possible to play pretty respectable single-stroke rolls on the bass drum.)

Jib has included an interesting option in the design of his pedal. Rather than have one beater holder, the *Upbeat* pedal is fitted with two, and they are slightly offset. By using two beaters at the same time, it is possible to achieve a flam effect on the bass drum. Whether this effect is desirable is up to the individual player, of course. I wouldn't use it except for extremely open, 1-and-3 downbeat patterns, but it does produce a very thick bass drum sound that might work well in those situations.

The aspect of the *Upbeat* pedal that I have the most problem with is power. Since the linkage is sprung, there is no point at which the beater is actually held against the drumhead by direct force—no "dead stop point," in other words. I found that, even with practice, I was unable to achieve the kind of volume and power on a totally acoustic bass drum that I require. However, power would probably not be a problem on a drum that was miked up, and certainly wouldn't on any electronic kick drum or acoustic bass drum fitted with electronic triggering. Given the speed that this pedal could offer when mastered, I could easily see it fitting in to a number of styles of music that call for machine-gun bass drum patterns using electronic sounds. Rap music immediately comes to mind.

As I said, the *Upbeat* pedal is not actually on the market at the moment. (As a matter of fact, our photographs are of Jib's hand-made prototype.) Jib has been seeking a manufacturer within the drum industry for some time. His design is radical, so he has met—not surprisingly—with resistance so far. But his concept is an interesting one, and in light of other recent developments along the same line, might merit closer examination by a forward-looking drum or hardware company. In the meantime, individuals who are interested in communicating with Jib about his *Upbeat* pedal design can reach him at 667 Osceola Avenue, Winter Park, Florida 32789.

—Rick Van Horn


DRUM TUNING

By Larry Nolly

• A comprehensive
• guide
to tuning
Drums

send $7.95 +
$1.00 shipping & handling to:
DRUMSTIX PUBLISHING
P.O. BOX 9216
WILMINGTON, DE 19809-9216

HOW I MIC DRUMS

DAVID MORGAN

TOURING HOUSE
SOUND ENGINEER FOR
WHITNEY HOUSTON
AND PAUL SIMON.

SM98 with polar modifier

"I'm using Shure's SM98 more and more because it helps me get that natural drum sound and the mic adds no 'color' of its own. Its small size doesn't obscure the audience's view of the drummer and means the mic is less likely to get hit by drumsticks.

"I prefer the warm natural sound you get with condensers. That's why I like the rich lows and low-mids I get with the SM98 on tom-toms. Plus it's rugged enough to stand up to road abuse.

"To get the fat sound I want, I position the mic about three fingers distance off the drum head and aim it toward the center to avoid unwanted rim harmonics.

"To minimize leakage from adjacent drums, I use Shure's A98SPM polar modifiers to get the isolation a supercardioid provides. I've found that combination works great overhead on the high hat as well. With the pattern control the modifiers provide, it's like having two mics in one.

"For area miking of percussion instruments, I prefer the SM81 because of its extended flat frequency response. And the SM57 still is my first choice on snare and guitar amps."

If you're looking for answers to your miking problems, start where David Morgan does—with Shure.

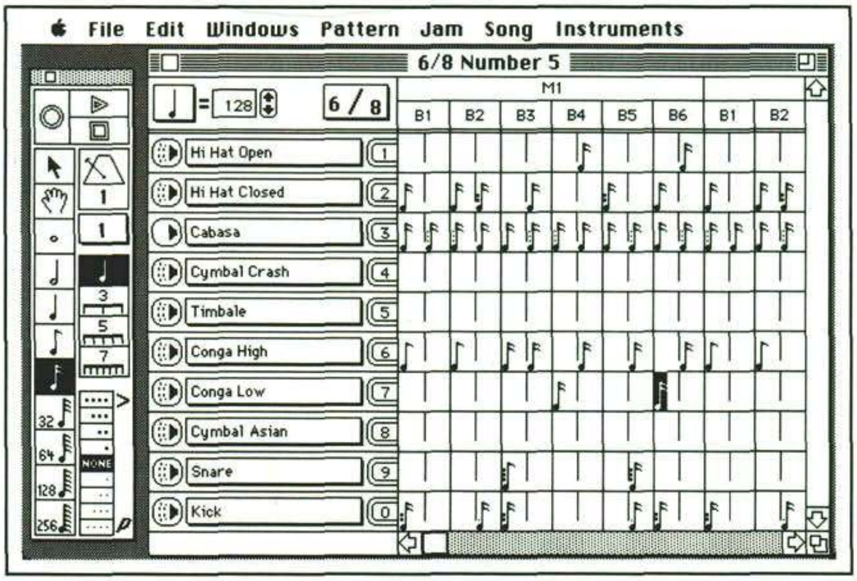
Call for a free copy of Shure's full line Microphone/Circuitry Catalog. Call 1-800-257-4873 (In Illinois 1-800-624-8522).

Shot on location, Whitney Houston Concert, Madison Square Garden, New York.

ON TOUR WITH SHURE®

Different Drummer

Example 1



During the past few months, the computerized drummer has been the beneficiary of a bevy of new programs. One of these is *Different Drummer* by Primera Software. *Different Drummer* is written for the Apple Macintosh computer and is a program that can comfortably wear several hats. In one disguise, it can turn your Mac into a drum machine. Used in a slightly different way, it can be a remote-control programmer or serve as a pattern and song librarian for your "real" drum machine.

The basic concept behind a program like *Different Drummer* is to give the programmer (not necessarily a drummer) a graphic interface for controlling a drum machine. As a rule, drum machines are long on physical features and short on visual aids. When you first boot *Different Drummer,* you enter the "Pattern Edit" screen as shown in Example No. 1.

The pattern edit interface is closely related to the well-known *MacPaint* program. On the left side of the screen is the tool palette, and on the right is the "canvas." The method of "painting" notes on the screen is very simple and intuitive. Simply click on a note value on the left side of the tool pallet (like the highlighted 16th in the example), move the mouse to where you want that note to be played (Conga Low on beat 6), and click. Similar to the "fat-bits" feature in *MacPaint,* clicking on a note that is already on the screen will erase it. And, if you click over an existing note with a different rhythmic value, the new value overwrites the old. What could be easier?

There are also additional goodies and options that can be used. The arrow and the hand have become traditional icons in the Macintosh community for selecting and grabbing. In *Different Drummer,* these two icons serve the same purpose. The programmer can select a note or group of notes with the arrow, and move them around on the screen with the hand.

Below these icons are the note values that can be inserted into a pattern. At first glance, it seems that any value from whole notes to 256th notes can be selected, but *Different Drummer* offers even more options. See the figures of the quarter, along with grouping of three, five, and seven in the palette? These are used in conjunction with the note values to let the programmer enter everything from "normal" notes, to 8th-note triplets, or even something like 128th-note septuplets. In other words, the programmer can get every note value found on a real drum machine, plus a few more.

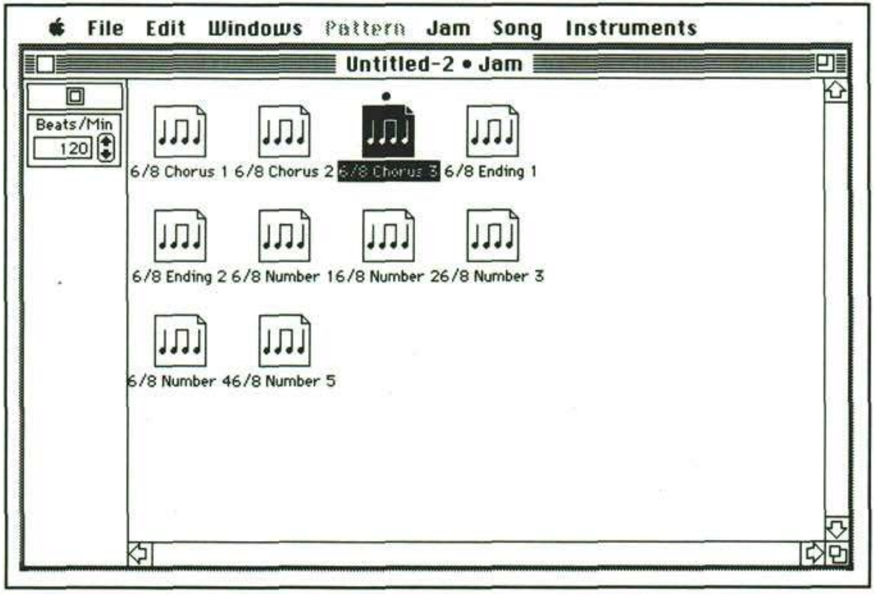
At the top of the palette are the motion controls. As you might expect, clicking on the arrow will start the pattern playing, , while clicking on the box causes the pattern to stop. The circle is used for "real-time" recording, which we'll cover in a minute. The bottom right of the tool palette presents the accent levels. Notice that the volume choices range from four heavy dots to four light dots, offering a total range of nine levels.

The programming window next to the tool palette contains an abundant amount of information. In the upper left is a tempo reading that can be adjusted in one-beat increments from one beat per minute to 256 beats per minute. Next to the tempo indication is the meter. A simple command under the Pattern menu called "Set Time Signature" presents you with a dialogue box for meter selection. Time signatures can be selected from 1,2,3, 4, 5, 6, 7, or 12 beats over single, half, quarter, 8th, 16th, or 32nd notes.

The entire right side of this window is dedicated to the pattern grid. Notice the "M1" at the top of the grid? This means that you're looking at the first measure of a multi-measure pattern. The next measure would begin after the vertical line, and in order to move the remainder of the pattern onto the screen, the programmer would click in the scroll bar at the bottom of the window.

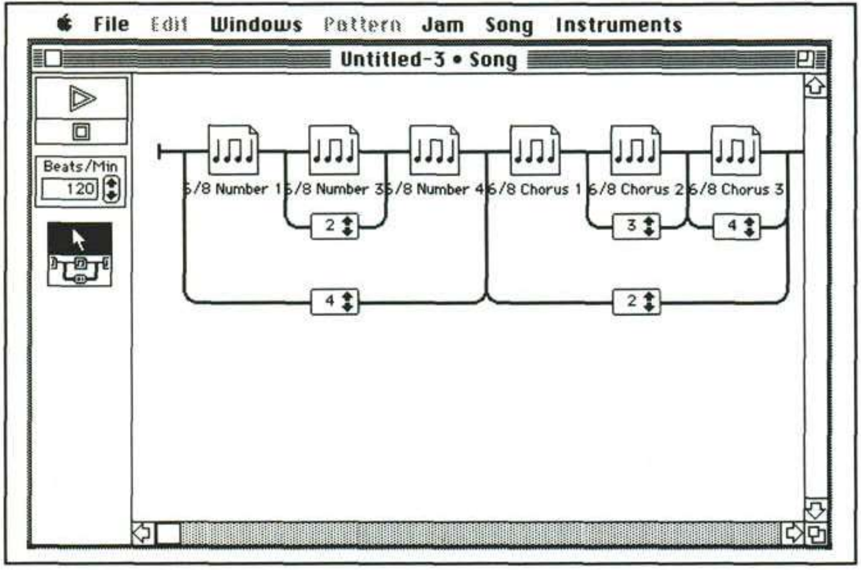
Below the measure indications are the beat markings. Since this particular pattern is in 6/8 time, there are six beats per measure. Next comes the programming grid itself. In the first example, the grid divides

Example 2



by Norman Weinberg

Example 3



each beat into two equal parts, because a 16th note is selected as the tool. Whenever a new note value is selected from the tool palette, the screen's grid changes to accommodate the new note value. Commands for zooming in and zooming out ensure that you see as little or as much of the grid as you want.

Using this type of a grid, it's very easy to see that the Hi-Hat Open is going to play a 16th note on the second half of beats 4 and 6. In addition, a quick glance at the type of dot next to the note will tell you which notes were entered with no change in dynamics (the Conga High track), softer dynamics (the Cabasa track), and stronger dynamics (the Snare track).

Some drum machines have the option of changing instruments after the attack points have already been programmed into the pattern. Manufacturers call this feature "Swap Sounds" or "Voice Assign." In *Different Drummer,* clicking on an instrument's name brings up a menu of all the sounds that are available in the program. Perhaps you would like to hear the pattern in Example No. 1 with a cowbell sound instead of the Cabasa. No problem: Calling up the cowbell is just a mouse click and a drag away. Once you get a configuration of instruments that you like, you can save them.

But wait a second! Where are these sounds coming from and what is playing them? Remember that one of the *Different Drummer's* hats is a full-featured drum machine. Included on the *Different Drummer* disk are almost 50 different digital samples that can be played by the digital processors inside the Macintosh. But that's not all! Not only does the program come with all those samples already on the disk, it has the ability to read digital sound files created by *Sound Designer, Soundcap,* and *SoundEdit.* If you own any of these sample-editing programs, it's nice to know that the fruits of your labors can be incorporated into *Different* Drummer!

There are a couple of basic limitations involved with using the Mac as a drum machine. First is the sound quality. The computer's digital-to-analog circuits use 8-bit linear sampling. If your ears are accustomed to the industry's current 16-bit high-end, these samples are going to sound grainy or noisy, and will lack the crystal-clear highs that 16-bits can offer.

The second limitation is the Mac's four-voice sound generator. This means that you can have any ten instruments on the screen for a pattern, but only four can sound at once. Trying to get five sounds simply won't work. At times, a long sample's decay will be cut off by another instrument's attack. Oh yes, the tiny speaker inside the Mac isn't state-of-the-art, so connecting the Mac to an external speaker will improve the sound considerably. Keep in mind that these shortcomings are not caused by *Different Drummer.* No programmer can get around them or outsmart them.

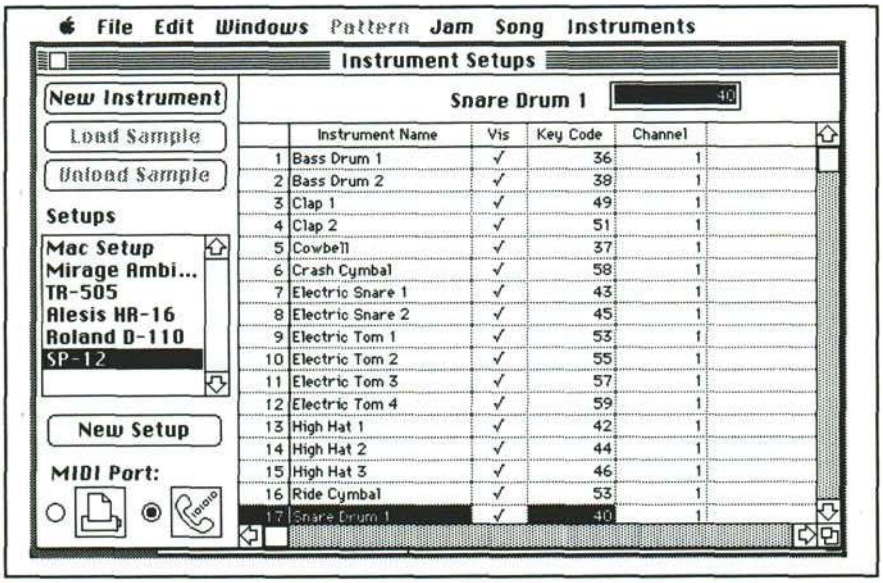
Different Drummer has a couple of handy features that should be mentioned. First is the ability to mute any instrument's track by simply clicking on the picture of the speaker next to the instrument's name (like the Cabasa in the first example). Second is the ability to record your patterns in a "real-time" mode.

Notice in the example that there are numbers next to the instrument's name for each track. These numbers correspond to the numbers on the top of the Macintosh's keyboard. In other words, put the program into record mode by clicking on the circle in the tool palette, and then tap the "5" key to trigger the sound of the Timbale. Bingo! The sound is played, the attack is quantized to the closest value selected in the tool palette, and everything is entered into the pattern. Obviously, the Mac's keyboard isn't velocity sensitive, but accent levels can be programmed by using the number keys on the Mac's numeric keyboard.

So, you've finally got the pattern to sound just right. All the attacks are in the right place, the dynamics are perfect, and everything is looking great. What do you do now? Easy: Give the pattern a name and save it to disk. Normal patterns take between 2K and 4K, depending on their density and length. On a standard double-sided Mac disk, you've got room for several hundred patterns.

Perhaps you've noticed that the first example contains a menu called "Jam." A jam is something that is unique to *Different Drummer.* By looking at Example No. 2, you can see that the jam window is very simple. There is a stop button (using the

Example 4



	Instrument Name	Vis	Key Code	Channel
1	Bass Drum 1	✓	36	1
2	Bass Drum 2	✓	38	1
3	Clap 1	✓	49	1
4	Clap 2	✓	51	1
5	Cowbell	✓	37	1
6	Crash Cymbal	✓	58	1
7	Electric Snare 1	✓	43	1
8	Electric Snare 2	✓	45	1
9	Electric Tom 1	✓	53	1
10	Electric Tom 2	✓	55	1
11	Electric Tom 3	✓	57	1
12	Electric Tom 4	✓	59	1
13	High Hat 1	✓	42	1
14	High Hat 2	✓	44	1
15	High Hat 3	✓	46	1
16	Ride Cymbal	✓	53	1
17	Snare Drum 1	✓	40	1

same graphic as in the pattern window), a tempo control, and an open window waiting to be filled with patterns.

The concept behind a jam is to add a number of patterns to the window and experiment with playing the patterns in different orders. To create a new jam, you simply tell *Different Drummer to* add patterns into the empty window. Once you have all the patterns you want on the screen, start the jam by clicking on one of the patterns. Once selected, the pattern will repeat in its entirety until the stop button is clicked or another pattern is selected. Get the idea? You can just click on different patterns to get a feel for how they work together. Nice, huh? And any pattern in the jam can be copied so that you can make slight variations and edits to the pattern without leaving the jam window or losing the original. In addition, jams can be saved to disk.

So far, we've created patterns and experimented with their order in the jam window. Now it's time to create a song. The song editor is where this program and its visual interface really shine. The song editor looks much like the jam editor with a few additional buttons. There is the arrow-like play button, a selection pointer tool, and a looping tool. As you can see from Example No. 3, a song is created by loading patterns into the window and adding any necessary loops.

It's a simple task to add loops of any size or even nested loops that are two or three levels deep. As in jams, patterns can be copied for adjustments while in the song editor. There is even a command for copying just the pattern's icon, without making an entirely new pattern (and using up more memory). This can come in handy when a particular pattern is used in several sections of a song. If you want to adjust the order of a pattern on the screen, just select it, and use the mouse to drag it around to a different location. Additions and deletions are even easier to perform, and, once you are satisfied with the result, saving the masterpiece to disk is a snap.

By now, you should have a pretty good handle on how using *Different Drummer* can turn your Macintosh into a drum machine. But, if you already own a "real" drum machine, can you still use *Different Drummer?* You bet!

What you see in Example No. 4 is this program's Instrument Setup Window. By using this window, you can give a name to any instrument, decide if the name will be visible in the "pop-up" menu of the pattern editor, assign that instrument a MIDI note number, and designate a MIDI channel. Bingo! You've made the MIDI connection. Anything you program on the computer's screen will be played by your drum machine using the drum machine's samples, tunings, stereo outputs, etc. *Different Drummer* will supply the note-on and -off messages, changes in velocities, and tempo—in essence, using your drum machine as an external sound generator for the software. And (get this), when running the program in this way, you're no longer limited to only four voices!

Once you've arranged all your instrument names, channels, and note numbers, the result can be saved as a "Setup" that can be selected from the Instruments menu. The program comes from the factory with setups for the Alesis *HR-16,* the Roland *TR505,* and the Yamaha *RX15.* In other words, changing the sounds of your patterns and songs can be as simple as calling a new setup from the menu. Creating a new setup takes only a few minutes, and for electronic drummers who own two different drum machines (or a drum machine and a multi-timbral unit like the Korg *M1* or Roland D-110), you can see how easily patterns can be "ported" from one machine to the other.

It's also possible to use *Different Drummer* as a librarian for your drum machine by creating patterns in the software and then recording them into the drum machine's internal memory by MIDI messages. I know that this may sound a bit klunky, but it does work, and for many models of drum machines, it would serve as the only current solution to the lack of drum machine librarians on the market.

There is one additional feature that must be mentioned. *Different Drummer can* create a standard MIDI file from any pattern or song. This means that you can create the entire drum track in *Different Drummer,* dump it out to a MIDI file, and open that file with your software sequencer (if your sequencer reads MIDI files).

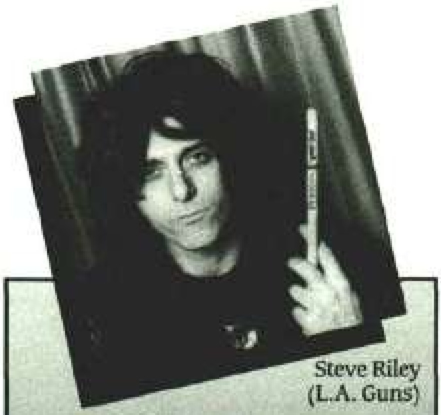
Different Drummer is a program that is going to save a lot of musicians a lot of time. Programming a drum machine in such a graphic environment is a welcome change of pace, and I found that the visual programming process did a lot to stimulate my creative juices.

There are a few things that I would like to see implemented in future versions of this product. The programmer should be able to use more than ten instruments per pattern. At least 32 instruments at once would give the software more flexibility when used as a remote-control programmer. But, with a scrolling window available, why have *any* limitation on the number of instruments visible at one time?

If Primera wants drummers to use this program in place of their own drum machines, then programmable tempo changes in the song editor are going to be a must. At the very least, *Different Drummer* should send the MIDI system-common messages of Start, Stop, and MIDI clocks for timing accuracy. *Different Drummer* should also be able to read MIDI messages sent from an external controller. This way, existing patterns already in a hardware drum machine could be sent to *Different Drummer.* These last two suggestions would make librarian-type features less of a hassle. Any other complaints (such as the sound quality, four-voice limitation, and slow screen refreshes) are really the fault of the Macintosh rather than the program.

If you currently own a Macintosh computer, and would like to do some drum machine programming, then getting *Different Drummer* is an option to consider. If you own a Mac along with a drum machine or a sound generator that includes drum samples, then *Different Drummer* is going to make programming much more fun. The manual is well-written and easy to understand, the sounds included with the program are as strong as can be expected considering the Mac's D/A circuits, and the visual interface is well-presented.

Buying this program may also be considered a political statement. If Primera and *Different Drummer* are supported by the drumming public, then they (along with other software publishers) will continue to upgrade and create programs that are designed for drummers and their specific needs. In other words, if the market is there, then the products will be forthcoming. If the software community notices that programs that support electronic percussion are financial disasters, then drummers are not going to get the kind of software support that keyboard players are already taking for granted. *Different Drummer* is available from selected retailers, or you can contact Primera Software, 1411 209th Avenue N.E., Redmond, Washington 98053, (206) 868-6360. The suggested retail price is $99.95.



Steve Riley
(L.A. Guns)

Get the gig!

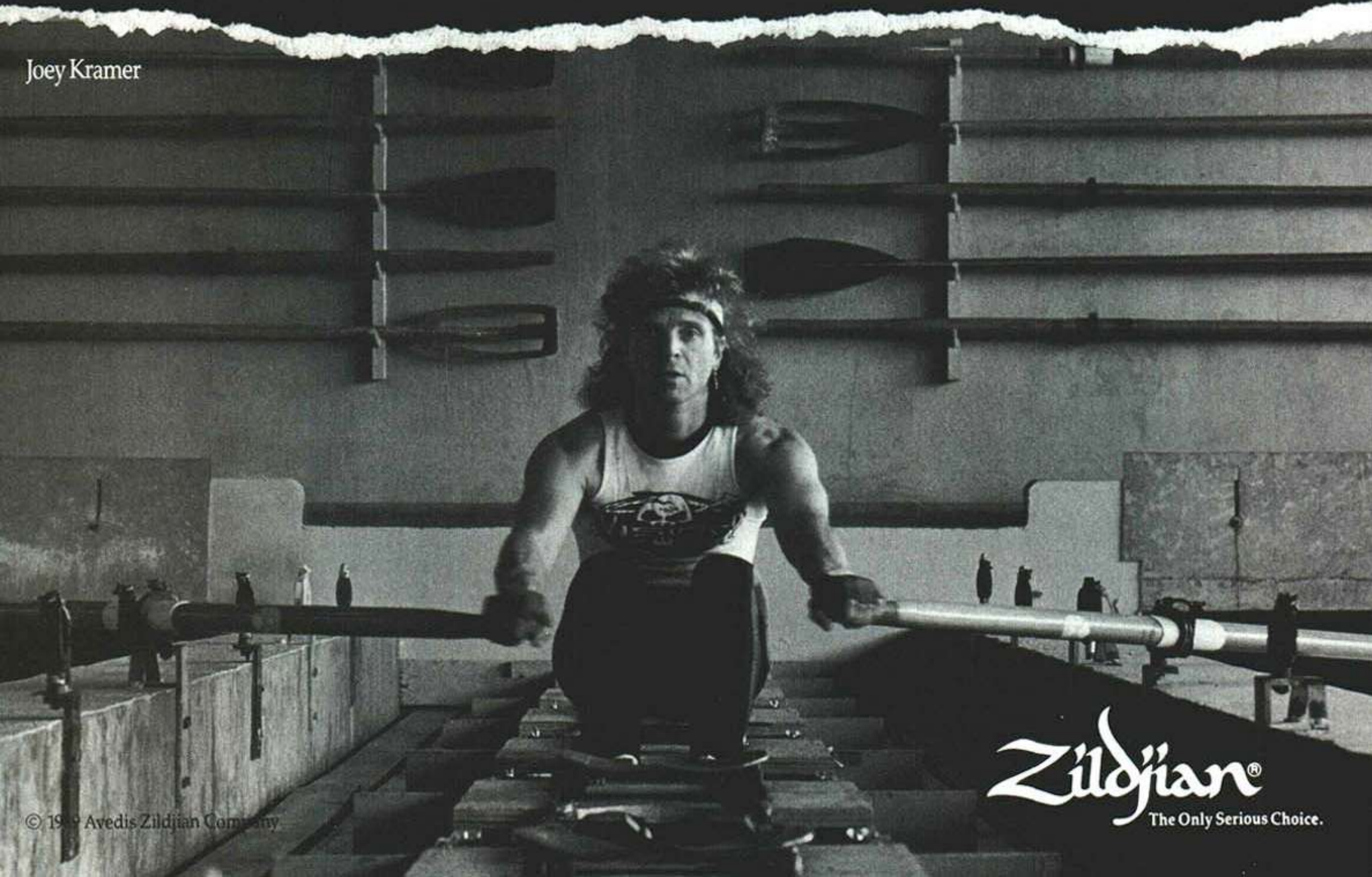
A New Generation™ of Drumsticks for a New Generation of Drummers.

pro·mark®

Send $2 for new color catalog.
10707 Craighead Drive, Houston,
Texas 77025 • 713/666-2525

Gregg Bissonette

MORE OF THE WORLD'S GREAT DRUMMERS PLAY ZILDJIANS THAN ALL OTHER CYMBALS COMBINED.



Joey Kramer

Zildjian®

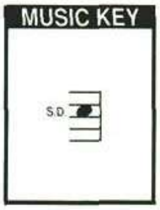
The Only Serious Choice.

© 19[illegible]9 Avedis Zildjian Company

ROCK 'N' JAZZ CLINIC

by Rod Morgenstein

Double Strokes, Triple Strokes, Accents, And More

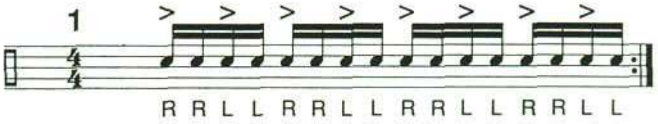

MUSIC KEY
S.D.

Warming up on a drum pad before sitting down at the drumset is very important to me. It loosens me up, relaxes me, and helps me mentally prepare for performing. The warm-up exercises that follow are based on two kinds of strokes: double strokes and triple strokes.

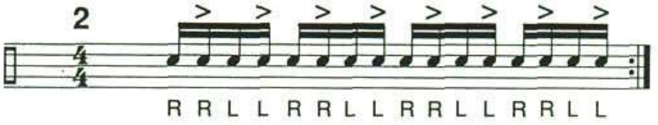
The placement (or displacement) of the stroke on the beat, along with strategically placed accents, make these exercises quite challenging. The benefit of these exercises is two-fold in that, in addition to loosening you up, the awkward placement of the accents and strokes will help strengthen your overall understanding and command of time. I strongly suggest counting and/or tapping your foot.

Examples 1 through 4 consist of double strokes beginning on the beat.

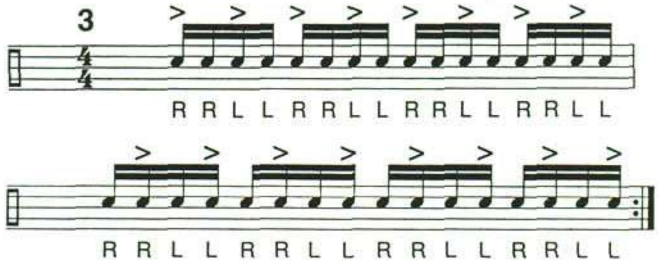
1


R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L

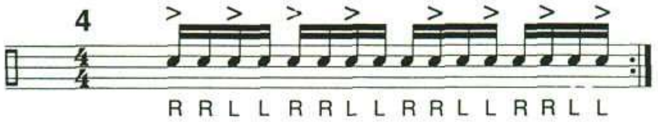
2


R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L

3

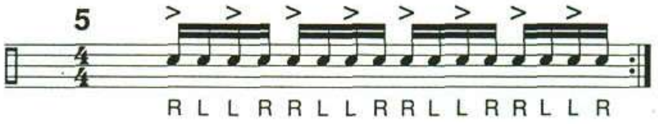

R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L
R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L

4

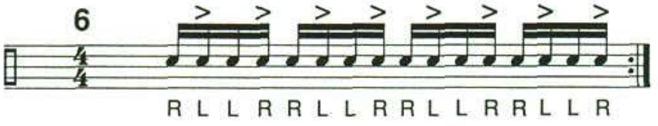

R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L

In examples 5 through 8, the double strokes are displaced by a 16th note. That is, the double stroke begins on the "e" of the beat.

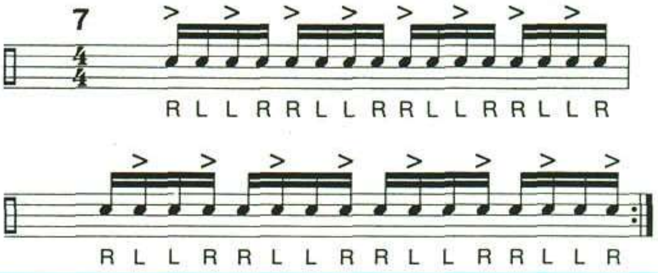
5


R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L R

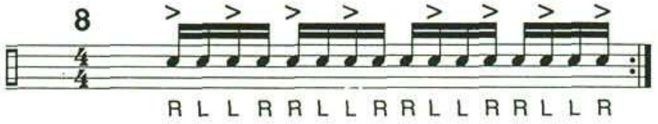
6


R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L R

7

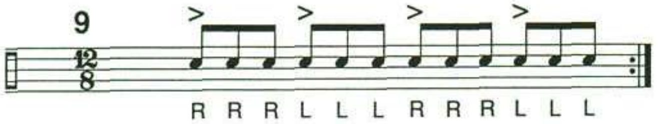

R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L R
R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L R

8

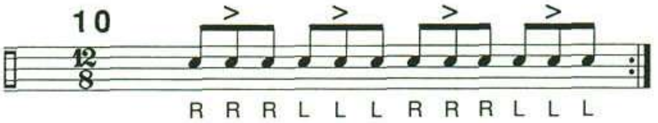

R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L R

Examples 9, 10, and 11 consist of triple strokes beginning on the beat.

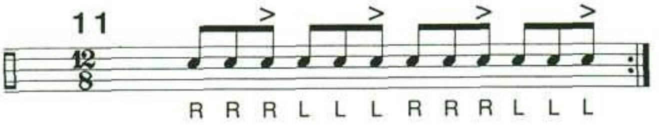
9


R R R L L L R R R L L L

10

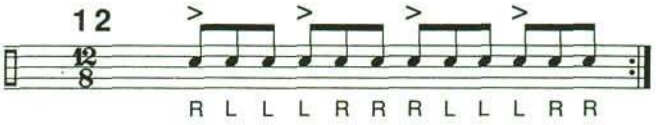

R R R L L L R R R L L L

11

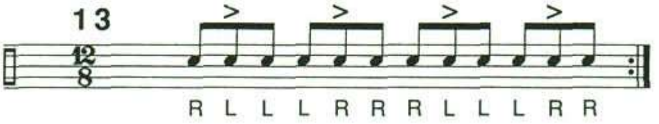

R R R L L L R R R L L L

In examples 12, 13, and 14, the triple strokes are displaced by an 8th note.

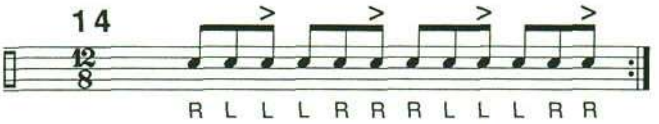
12


R L L L R R R L L L R R

13

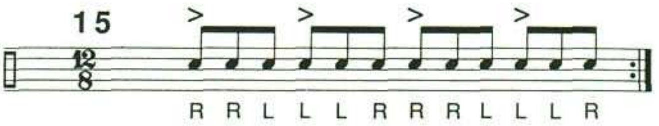

R L L L R R R L L L R R

14

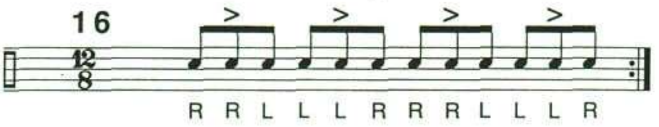

R L L L R R R L L L R R

Examples 15, 16, and 17 have the triple strokes being displaced by two 8th notes.

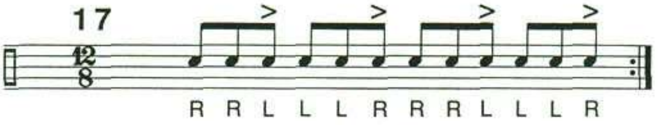
15


R R L L L R R R L L L R

16


R R L L L R R R L L L R

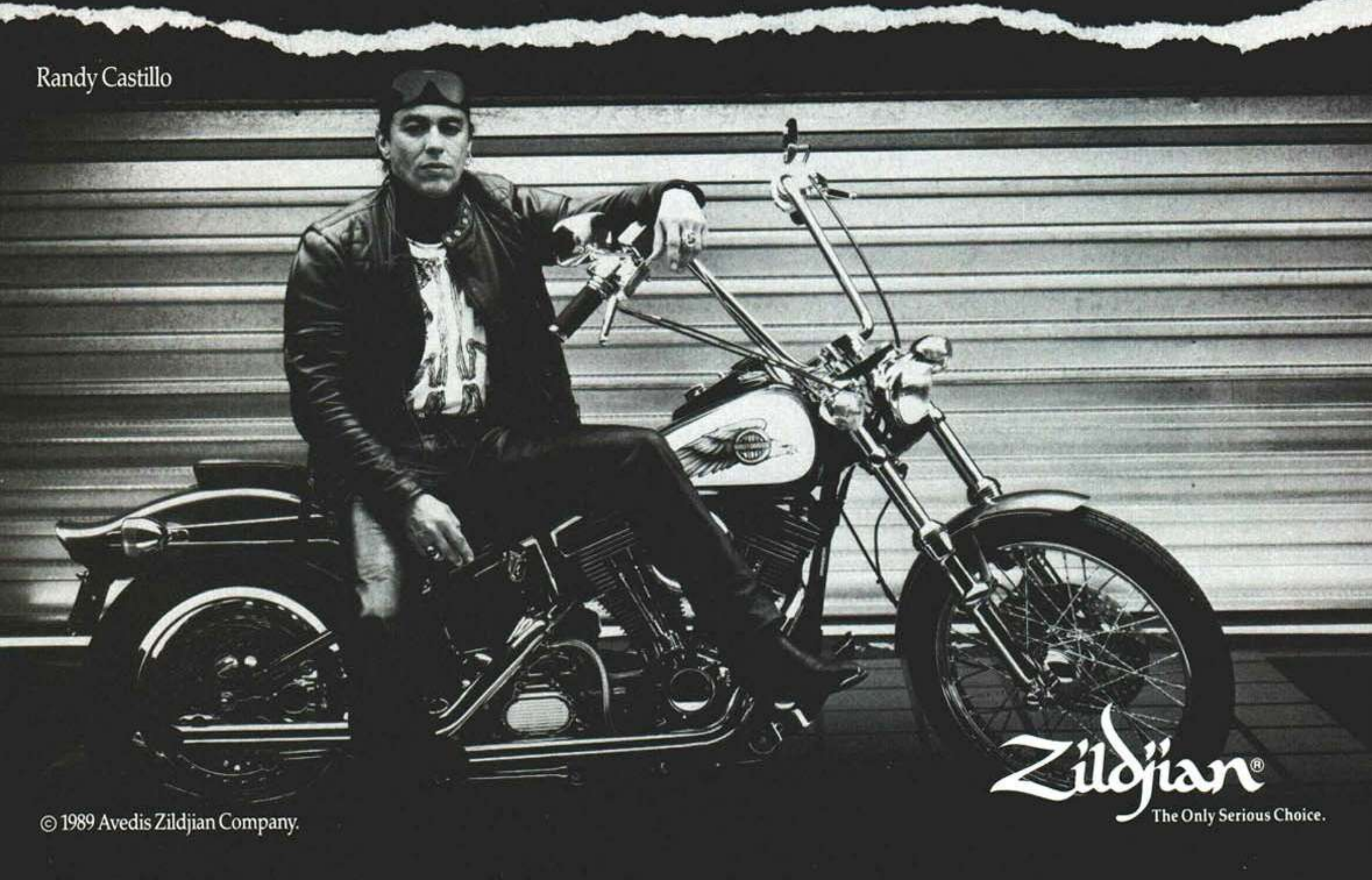
17


R R L L L R R R L L L R

Deceptively simple, these exercises are what you might call musical tongue twisters. As part of my warm-ups, they keep me on my toes while at the same time loosening me up and mentally preparing me to "tear it up" on the drumset.

Tommy Aldridge

MORE OF THE WORLD'S GREAT DRUMMERS PLAY ZILDJIANS THAN ALL OTHER CYMBALS COMBINED.



Randy Castillo

Zildjian®

The Only Serious Choice.

© 1989 Avedis Zildjian Company.

CONCEPTS

by Roy Burns

Frustration

A young man from a midwestern city wrote to me recently and said, "As much as I enjoy your articles in *MD,* I wish they were more realistic. In the town I live in, all you have to do to get the best gigs is kiss ass and do cocaine with the right people. Meanwhile, serious, dedicated, and punctual drummers are not working."

I wrote back to this young man and listed a number of great drummers I know well as friends who are not into drugs. Famous drummers come in all types, but most of the successful ones are career-oriented and would not do anything that would endanger what they have worked so hard to achieve. I also suggested that if the music scene in the town that he lived in was truly as negative as he described, perhaps he should consider relocating. This won't necessarily solve all of the problems, but sometimes a fresh and new environment can be like a new start. The young man was kind enough to respond to my letter. He said that if all the drummers I had named were "straight," he felt as though he was in pretty good company. He just wanted to find other serious musicians to play with.

We all have times when we are frustrated and upset. Sometimes it can be that you are working a lot but you don't care for the music you are playing to make a living. Studio musicians often feel this way. The smart ones do outside gigs where they can really play (even though the gigs may pay very little) so that they can keep their feeling and interest in music at a high level. In L.A., you can hear various members of the *Tonight Show* band, for example, working clubs for the opportunity to "stretch out" and really play.

The opposite of this problem is experienced by drummers who *are* playing the music they love, with musicians they respect and enjoy working with, but for very little money. These drummers may feel very frustrated because the music they love to play doesn't pay enough money to buy necessities. It can be especially frustrating when you see other drummers getting ahead—at least for the moment—using the methods described by the young man who wrote me. Note that I said "at least for the moment." I started playing in bands when I was 14. I have seen many drummers come and go. In nearly every case, when a drummer developed a drinking or drug problem, that drummer's career either never developed or was short-lived.

For example, I have a very close friend who developed a heroin problem. He finally enrolled himself in a heavy-duty drug program, got himself straightened out, and has been playing actively for many years now. His younger brother was not so lucky. He died from a drug overdose. He was also a promising young drummer who thought drugs would get him somewhere faster—and they did. They got him to the *grave* faster.

Other drummers—some of them quite famous—have gotten off drugs after developing serious problems. However, in most cases, their careers were damaged in one way or another. The same is true of alcohol. It too has ruined the careers of a number of great musicians. Conversely, look at the drummers who have had long careers. They have maintained a healthy lifestyle.

The music business is the "rejection" business. There are more drummers than there are jobs or bands. It has always been this way. The same is true in athletics. Think of how many high school and college football teams there are in the U.S. However, there are only 26 professional football teams. Not every college player is going to make it to the pros. You just have to keep plugging away. You have to prepare yourself the best that you can. Then, if you don't make it big, at least you gave it your best shot. Remember, the odds are against you. It is a very competitive and tough business.

There are no shortcuts! A very wise woman told me years ago that "if you go up like a rocket, you usually come down like a rocket." Tremendous early success is usually difficult to maintain. However, if you go up steadily, at a reasonable pace, you have a better chance to maintain your success. *Remember, it is not important how your career starts out. All that counts is how it ends up!*

Organize your own band and rehearse two nights a week. Again, many studio musicians play in rehearsal bands, just to have a chance to play music they enjoy. Organize a percussion ensemble with any combination of interested players. Set up four drumsets and have fun. Experiment with different instruments and different sounds.

One good rule to follow when thinking about the difficulties and frustrations in our business is "don't worry about other drummers." Envy gets you nowhere. Worry about what you can do to improve your own career.

As I mentioned, relocating is a valid option. I left Kansas for New York City. Unless you're from a big city, you usually can't stay in your home town and make it. The exception to this is when musicians form a group, get discovered, and have a string of hit records, such as Bill Berry with R.E.M. This band has been together for years. The same thing happened with the Beatles. However, the chances are still tough at best.

Not all of us are going to wind up at the top of our profession. However, this does not mean that drumming and music can't still be a big part of our lives. Music, unlike athletics, can be a joy all of your life. Even when you are too old to play, you can listen and appreciate. (Come to think of it, old football players can still watch *Monday Night Football,* so in a way, perhaps it *is* the same.)

My attitude is, number one, there are no shortcuts. Number two, I am glad to be alive. Number three, I am blessed with good health. Number four, I grew up and live in the U.S.A. (In other countries, the opportunities are far fewer; ask anyone who has traveled.) Number five, be grateful that you can pursue what you love to do. And, last but not least, remember this: No one said it was going to be easy!

WANTED:

***DRUMMERS* WITH IDEAS TO SHARE!**

Some of the best, most practical tips for drummers often come from typical working players—drummers just like yourself. To help pass along those tips to drummers who can benefit from them, *MD* will soon debut a brand-new department called *DrumLine.*

If you have a quick, proven tip that has saved you time, money, or effort, we want to hear from you. Items can range from equipment maintenance, repair, or design tips, to valid practice and playing ideas. And we'll pay you $15.00 for your winning tip if it's published!

We ask that you keep your *DrumLine* tip to 150 words maximum. Photos or drawings are fine, but they cannot be returned. Send your tip, along with your name and address, to *DrumLine,* c/o Modern Drummer, 870 Pompton Avenue, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009.

Why keep your unique idea to yourself? Share it with thousands of drummers around the world through *MD's DrumLine*—and we'll send you a check as a Thank You!

Rikki Rockett

MORE OF THE WORLD'S GREAT DRUMMERS
PLAY ZILDJIANS THAN ALL OTHER CYMBALS COMBINED.

Fred Coury

Zildjian®
The Only Serious Choice.

© 1989 Avedis Zildjian Company.

Drums: An Engineer

Last month *we* looked at an acoustic drum from the viewpoint of an engineer. We used some basic physical principles to help us understand how an acoustic drum works. This month we'll extend this analysis to drumheads.

First, let's discuss a property of musical instruments called "modes of vibration." If the A string of a guitar is plucked, we'd expect to hear an A note (110 vibrations per second). This does indeed happen. However, we hear higher frequencies, too. The A note by itself is the "fundamental" mode of vibration; the higher frequencies that we hear simultaneously are produced by higher modes of vibration. No musical instrument can produce only a fundamental mode; the closest that we can come is a tuning fork (which still isn't quite pure). The amount and volume of the higher modes give musical instruments their own individual sounds. This is why pianos and trumpets sound different, even if the same notes are played on each.

Before we examine drumheads specifically, we'll look at a simpler mechanical system: a vibrating string. (Analyzing the string's properties will make it easier to understand drumheads later.) Picture a guitar string that has just been plucked. We automatically think of it vibrating as in *Figure 1.* What's not so obvious is that the string is simultaneously vibrating in several other patterns, as shown in *Figure 2.* (We would see these patterns if we looked at a vibrating string with a strobelight instead of a steady light.) These are its higher modes of vibration.

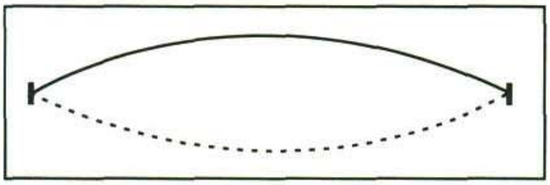


Figure 1: Fundamental vibration of a guitar string.

Scientists have invented their own terminology to describe this sort of vibrating system. Of interest to us is the word "node." This describes a point (such as in the middle of the string of *Figure 2A)* where there is no movement. Conversely, an "anti-node" is a point at which maximum movement occurs. In *Figure 2A,* there are two anti-nodes, at 1/4 and 3/4 of the way along the string. Touching this vibrating string at different points will have different effects. If we touch a node, nothing will happen; the string will continue to vibrate unimpeded. However, if we touch an anti-node, vibration will be obstructed.

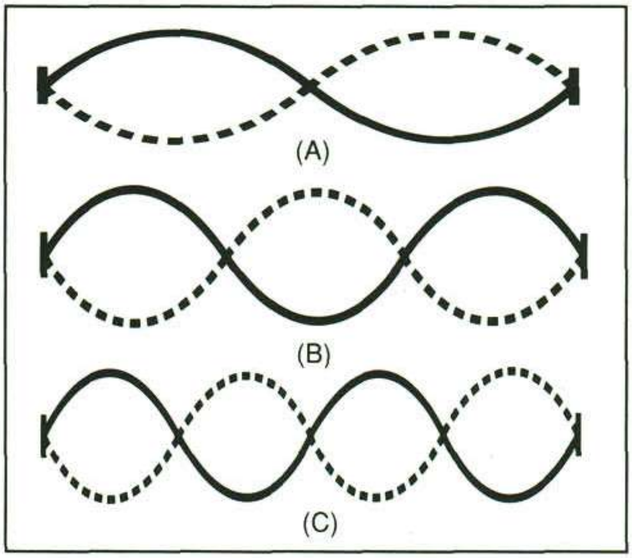


Figure 2: Some higher modes of a vibrating guitar string.

Now, we'll apply all of this to drumheads. If we assume a perfectly tuned drumhead, we'll come pretty close to what acoustic engineers call "an ideal membrane." These scientists have analyzed membrane vibration pretty extensively. What they found can be useful to us as drummers.

Drumheads are actually very complex devices. Our guitar string analogy is still useful, but we must change our idea of a "node" to that of a "nodal line." In a drumhead, there are no longer points with no movement. Instead, there are lines of no movement.

Figure 3 shows the first six modes of vibration of a drumhead. Each has a nodal line around the rim, which is obvious: The rim prevents motion. However, nodal lines also occur across the head and around it. (This may all seem strange, but it's a proven fact.) These six modes are the simplest; at least 12 have been identified, and they get more complicated as you go up. However, since the lowest modes are generally the loudest, we'll content ourselves with the first six.

These modes are the reasons behind some common drum behavior. If you hit a drum out near the rim, chances are you're hitting an area that's an anti-node for most of the modes of vibration. This will give a nice ringy sound. The center of the drum, however, is something of a paradox. It's the anti-node for the fundamental (and most important) mode. However, for four out of the first six (and five out of the next six) modes, it's part of a nodal line. This is why the center of the drumhead is a "dead" spot; the higher modes of vibration aren't present when you hit the drum there.

We can use this information if we decide to muffle the drum. The center of the drumhead is a good spot to dampen the fundamental mode of the drum, since it's the anti-node for this lowest frequency. Adhesive "dots" are sold for this purpose, in various sizes. The more popular option is to buy ready-made dotted heads. (Such heads also have the advantage of being more durable than a plain head.) If you want to muffle more of the drum's modes, try a Remo *Pinstripe* or, more extremely, an Evans *Hydraulic* oil-filled head. Last month's article explained how a many-layered material filters out the higher frequencies, and this same principle applies here. If instead you want to soak up only the really high frequencies, try a little tape or tissue muffling, at a spot a few inches inside the rim. A good formula to use is to multiply the drum's diameter by 1/5 or 1/4. So, for a 12" tom, you'd muffle 2 1/2" to 3" away from the rim. This is where most of the anti-nodes are. The actual orientation of the nodal lines will depend on how many lugs there are and where they're located, so don't try just one spot. Move the muffling around a little to see what sounds best, but keep the same distance from the rim. An inch or two to the left or right might mean the difference between a node and an anti-node for a certain mode of vibration.

How much muffling to use is a matter of taste, but the less, the better. If you use too much, you'll increase the effective mass of the drumhead and (if you really pile it on) decrease the effective surface area. Both actions raise the drum's pitch.

If, to get a reasonable sound, you do have to really pile on the muffling, something's wrong. If tuned properly, the *by Spiros A. Psarris*

ing Analysis: Part 2

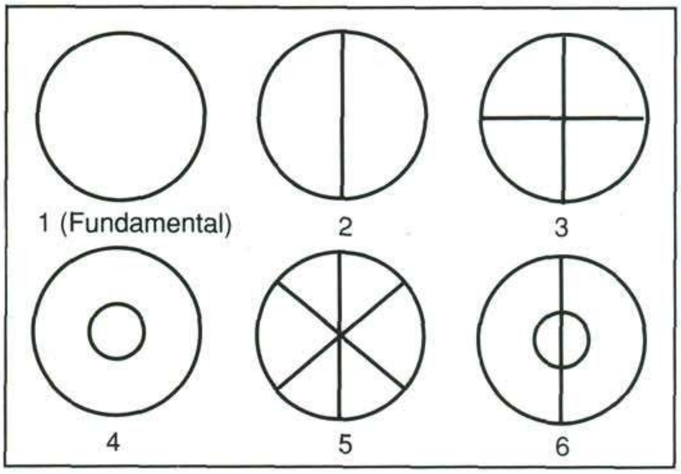


Figure 3: The first six modes of a vibrating drumhead.

drum should give a decent sound even by itself. If the drum won't tune properly, check your equipment. Less expensive drums especially have problems such as bendable rims, poorly machined threads in the lug boxes, etc. These types of things will make it impossible to get a good sound from the drum.

By the way, drumshells also have nodes and anti-nodes. As drummers, we have little influence over the drumshell's vibration, so we usually ignore it. However, we now know what is meant by certain snare drum companies when they boast of hardware on the drum's "nodal points." We see that hardware mounted on the nodes of vibration will have little effect on the drum's vibration. Compare this to the dead weight of six to ten blocks of metal screwed to the drumshell at non-nodal points. Obviously, "nodal-point" hardware is an improvement.

We've now examined the complete operation of an acoustic drum. Study this information carefully, and make sure you understand the underlying principles. They can help to eliminate the guesswork when you try to achieve "your" sound. Good luck!

FREE! DISCOUNT DRUM CATALOG

"T" SHIRTS

$6.50 per shirt
Certified Check or Money Order Only
(Includes Shipping)
Outside US
$8.00 US Funds

ATLANTA PRO PERCUSSION
Front
"Drummers do it... in Rhythm!"
Back

—Specify Size—

"We will beat any advertised price"

ATLANTA
PRO PERCUSSION, INC.
2526 Spring Road • Smyrna, GA 30080
(404) IDO-DRUM (404) 436-3786

Call or write for our *FREE* DISCOUNT FLYER
Call Information for our toll free number

When you are serious about your sounds

DRUM DOCTORS™

Recording Quality Drumset Rentals

Offering L.A.'s Finest Collection
of Acoustic, Electronic & Vintage Drums

- **Sets** - modified and tweeked for recording by **the** Drum Doctor Ross Garfield.
- **Serious Snares** - over 60 to choose from, including Black Beautys, Radio Kings, Piccolos, Pioneers, Noble and Cooleys.
- **Tuning** - we'll make the drums on your session sing in no time.
- **Samplers** - and triggering devices.
- **Cartage** - licensed and insured.

• WILL SHIP ANYWHERE.
• 7 DAYS • 24 HOURS

(818) 765-7989
N. Hollywood, California